second edition

How to Give Half of Your Work Away for Free

matthew manos

Testimonials

What others are saying about the #givehalf *movement.*

"verynice's dedication to pro-bono is unparalleled in the business community." – JENNIFER KANG, TAPROOT FOUNDATION

"What if we inhabited a world in which every service provider gave half of their work away for free? Matthew Manos, founder of verynice, a design and innovation consultancy that commits 50 percent of its efforts toward pro-bono service, is pioneering a global, small business movement to do just that." – GEORGE MCGRAW, HUFFINGTON POST

"A must-read for anyone in social enterprise" – AARON HURST, FOUNDER OF TAPROOT FOUNDATION, CEO OF IMPERATIVE

"The notion of giving back--not as an afterthought, but an integral part of business is, to me, a radical and wonderful idea. It can change an individual and a community, indeed the world. To replicate the verynice business model is to amplify all that good and creativity."
– KAREN SLOVIN, REAL ESTATE MARKETING PROFESSIONAL, USA

"This is not only revolutionary, it's necessary. We must expand this vision of what a business must do. We must learn to include this cyclic philosophy or receiving and giving in order to face the upcoming world challenges." – CARLOS MICELI, FORMER INNOVATION ADVISOR, THE CITY OF BUENOS AIRES

"Nothing in a company is ever done without considering the return on the investment or the profit margins associated with each project, but there's one design firm that's turning this paradigm on its head: verynice." – ERIN MAYS, HOW MAGAZINE

"It seems nice guys can finish first."- DOTTED LINE, BLOG OF ART CENTER COLLEGE OF DESIGN

"This is boldly conceived, admirably executed and eloquently described. Thanks and well done." - DR. STUART CANDY, FUTURIST & EXPERIENTIAL DESIGNER.

"We are living in a post industrial world, folks. Business cannot continue as usual and more and more we are seeing the need to employ ethical, sustainable, and philanthropic avenues for business. Whether it is altruistic or an outcome of the transparency of immediate communication." - MARLON FUENTES, DESIGN MANAGER & ETHNOGRAPHER. USA

"From Henry Ford's assembly line to TOMS Shoes' highly publicized "one for one" concept, organizations are continuing to experiment with new ways of doing business. Los Angeles-based verynice, a global design, business, and innovation consultancy that dedicates over 50% of its efforts to pro-bono services, is another example of a company who has been successful by applying an untraditional business model."
- DENNIS DEMORI, MARKETING STRATEGIST

"We have deep appreciation and respect to Matthew Manos and his team at verynice. The small business service industry has long been waiting for a philanthropic model that would allow service providers to maximize impact to the local community they serve. Our digital agency here in the Central Valley can't wait to implement this model."
- VICTOR RAMAYRAT, TECHNOLOGIST & ENTREPRENEUR. USA

"At VeryNice, pro-bono work isn't something that employees do off the clock, with or without incentives." - RYAN SCOTT, FORBES MAGAZINE

"After many years of searching and thanks to the work and mentoring of Matthew Manos, founder of verynice, I now know that the key is to leverage pro bono projects and integrate them into my small business, blending business growth and social impact together." - ALINA LEANG, SOUL BUCKET

"Matthew has been extremely important in giving me advice/insight on adopting a 50:50 model for my social media agency. Without his guidance, I wouldn't have had the confidence to pursue this model.

Additionally, it's a fantastic way to differentiate your organization. In turn, giving back improves my bottom line because I'm always conducting business development and putting my brand in front of the community." - ANDREW GOTTLIEB, FOUNDER & CEO OF NO TYPICAL MOMENTS LLC

"If you have ever been tempted by volunteerism and pro-bono work, you may have considered doing it as an extracurricular activity— after working hours or during weekends and holidays. But what if someone told you that you can give away more than 50% of your regular work for free without any implications for your business except positive development and expansion? It may sound impossible, but the neo-philanthropist and entrepreneur Matthew Manos has something else to say about it." - NERIDA GILL, ADMIN BANDIT

"I have a pro bono program, so I work for free very often, but I regard it as giving back, rather than just not getting paid. There are set rules about who it is for and why and what they get exactly, so I can always refer back to those if I ever doubt. This was inspired by Matthew Manos's work..." - MARIA GIL ULLDEMOLINS, WWW.TINYMIGHTY.ME

"Matthew & his mission at verynice have and continue to serve as tremendous inspiration for us at filmanthropos. Without them we would not have pursued building in pro-bono offerings within the core of our business. Our business model has greatly evolved because of the guidance we continue to receive from verynice." - JASMINE YOUSSEFZADEH, FOUNDER & CEO OF FILMANTHROPOS

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90°

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SPECIAL THANKS: Lorie and Jeff Manos

TO MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY,
ESPECIALLY JEFF & LORIE MANOS,
KATE SLOVIN, AND BORA SHIN

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I. Getting Started

INTRODUCTION

So, how did this book come about anyways?

verynice is a global design and innovation consultancy that gives over half of its work away for free. For over 5 years we have been developing verynice's business model in order to get it to a point in which it was ready for replication. It started off as a disaster scene with very little hope for sustainability and has since evolved into a scalable model that has inspired thousands of entrepreneurs from around the globe to partake in pro-bono work and, for some of them, commit to giving half of their work away for free. In order to help feed this growing movement, we have made the decision to open-source our business model so that all of our "secrets" can be out in the open and we can take a more proactive role in the replication of our business model.

After launching a crowd-funding campaign in September of 2013, we were able to produce a first edition of the book. It sold out in six months and attracted over 5,000 readers across nearly 1,500 cities around the world. The online edition was even translated into over 60 languages. In response to a brewing, global movement, we decided to self-fund an additional run of the book, but knew we wanted it to be something even bigger. What you have in your hand is the result, and it's everything we always wanted this book to be.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

What do I do with this thing?

This may read like a book, but it is actually a toolkit equipped with practical definitions, frequently asked questions, and theoretical explorations. In lieu of this, the "book" is not necessarily intended to be read from cover to cover. Instead, it aims to be designed in a manner that will allow you to take from it what you need, and leave behind what you don't—and don't worry, you won't hurt my feelings. The book was authored by one person, but was made possible thanks to the curiosity of dozens. A lot of planning and effort went into assuring that this book maintains its functionality. If you feel as though something is missing from the toolkit that could serve as a great resource for the audience as a whole, please email your suggestions for the second edition to info@verynice.co.

WHO IS THIS FOR?

Is this content relevant for my goals and me?

This book exists to educate service providers and small businesses in the service-oriented business space in order to inspire these entrepreneurs to give half of their work away for free. Simultaneously, it strives to shed light on the necessity to do so, both from the standpoint of giving as an opportunity and an obligation. The model, and much of the experience behind the model, is driven by service-oriented business. This model is not designed for product-oriented business. This model is also not designed for large companies. Instead, the focus is on social entrepreneurs, independent contractors, small businesses, in-house design teams, and business design enthusiasts. This book assumes that the reader has a handle on the basics of business.

A. SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

A social entrepreneur is a business designer who incorporates giving back as an integral component of their day-to-day operation. Often times, startup social enterprises are trying to discover a strategy for giving back in a unique way. There are currently no other models in existence that allow service providers to give back to their community in a sustainable manner. Social entrepreneurs in the for-profit space can leverage our methodology as a strategy for altruism and business development.

B. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS & SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

An independent contractor is the same as a freelancer. They work remotely with a small group of clients, or sometimes work in-house within design firms and ad agencies. Small business owners are similar to independent contractors, but are often comprised of a small team and take on larger projects. Independent contractors and small business owners, as service providers, can leverage our methodology to find a way to incorporate philanthropy into their business plan in a viable and sustainable manner.

C. IN-HOUSE TEAMS

Sometimes big business is really just a bunch of small businesses. More and more, large companies are forming their own internal design teams or squad of consultants to bring smart people together to focus on the problems the company is facing. While our interest in welcoming in-house teams, and most specifically the decision makers behind those teams, is not intended to aid a small group of people in the re-imagining of how the company as a whole works, we are interested in providing this book as a resource to influence how the company's clients work.

D. BUSINESS DESIGN ENTHUSIASTS

Business design enthusiasts are strategists and researchers that are interested in the intersection between design and business as well as practitioners that help clients optimize their business models. Our methodology can be leveraged by business design enthusiasts in client engagements and in personal research to learn about a cutting edge model for social enterprise that is specifically engaging with philanthropy and altruism.

E. PROFESSIONALS INTERESTED IN UNIQUE OUTSOURCING MODELS

So maybe all of this volunteer talk turns you off... well, even if you are not interested in the pro-bono space at all, this guidebook has something for you. verynice's unique pro-bono business model relies heavily on a proprietary network of collaborators the studio has developed over the course of 5 years. This book will reveal some of the best practices for leveraging an outsourcing model like verynice's, where over 99% of the team is actually off-site.

ILLUSTRATION BY ALDIS OZOLINS

II. Toolkit Part 1: Defining & Open-Sourcing the Model

Giving over half of your work away for free is easier said than done. What are the logistics of doing such a thing? Why would you ever want to commit to this kind of generosity, as a business owner? How is this even possible? Through a series of explorations that range from clear cut definitions and graphical interpretations to narrative scenarios and traditional business modeling, Part 1 of the *"How to Give Half of Your Work Away For Free"* toolkit will examine the subtleties of making a 50% pro-bono model work.

a. *What is the model? How does it work? Why is this important?*

WHAT: The verynice model operates on a strategic service-oriented business approach called the "double-half" methodology: double your workload, give half away for free.

HOW: If you want to give half of your work away for free and do just as well as the next guy, the simple equation is that you have to do twice the amount of work that they do. As a result, one of the key components of the double-half methodology is an innovative approach to capacity building in which creative outsourcing and openness to remote collaboration is at the center. By bringing on teams on a per project basis as opposed to building a dedicated, permanent staff, monthly fixed costs are brought to a minimum which makes giving work away for free an affordable, if not overhead-less, endeavor. While paid projects employ paid contractors, un-paid/pro-bono projects pull from the same pool of contractors, but invite them to participate in the project on a volunteer basis.

Because the model thrives off of a high volume of work, the core competency of the permanent individual (or team if applicable) is management above all other skill sets. Typical roles of production are outsourced as often as possible and are overseen by the permanent team in order to drive focus and allow for successful time management.

While 100% of guaranteed revenue streams originate from only 50% of the clientele, an exchange of "value" still results from all projects regardless of the presence of monetary payment. New contacts that are developed through pro-bono endeavors are leveraged in order to fuel word-of-mouth marketing which, in turn, serves as a primary referral base for new business leads. Small organizations are home to a staff that is, more often than not, working on a volunteer basis. These people have "day jobs" elsewhere. These day jobs can become a source of projects for you. Large organizations are not home to a volunteer staff, but they do house influential board members who are often CEOs of major corporations. These board members are a "foot in the door" to potential paid work from larger accounts that would otherwise not be within reach.

When you are doing something for free, more often than not, you are allowed more control over the scope and/or creative vision for a project then you would for a paid engagement. As a result, the work that is derived from unpaid clientele frequently allows for the piloting of an experimental idea or completely new category of service. In doing so, volunteer work serves as a tool for growth in a company's experience and offering.

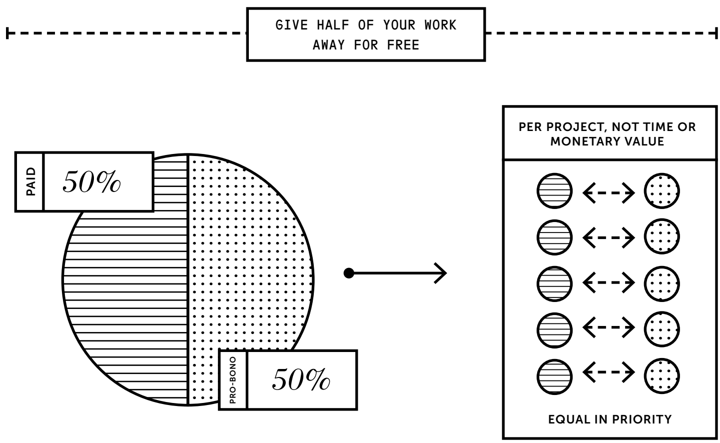
WHY: Non-profit organizations are spending billions upon billions of dollars each year on fees billed by service-providers. While expenditures for services like marketing and design grow each year, funding declines. In fact, in 2013, there were 62 billion dollars in cuts from federal funding for non-profit organizations. When you compare this to foundation funding which, in 2012, came to a total of 46 billion dollars, it is clear that the social sector is becoming overwhelmingly drained of resources. Traditional means of philanthropy, alone, can no longer take the only supportive seat at the table.

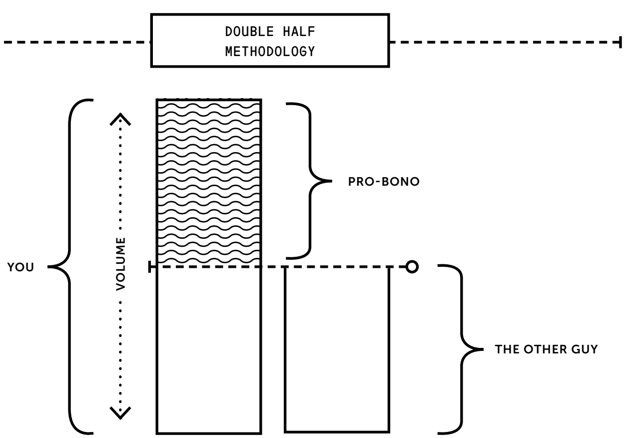
When a non-profit is able to save valuable financial resources thanks to the generous pro-bono commitments of service-providers, they are able to immediately re-invest those dollars directly into their cause. Imagine what a spare 8 billion dollars could do? As business owners, freelancers, and entrepreneurs, we need to do our part to alleviate expenses for non-profit organizations by making giving back an integral component of our business model. The double-half methodology is one way to do that.

b. *Infographic/Visual Explanation*

A series of visual explorations into explaining verynice's business model. The series of graphics cover project flow, team management, talent resources, client sectors, revenue models, impact measurement, and company bandwidth.

HIGH LEVEL





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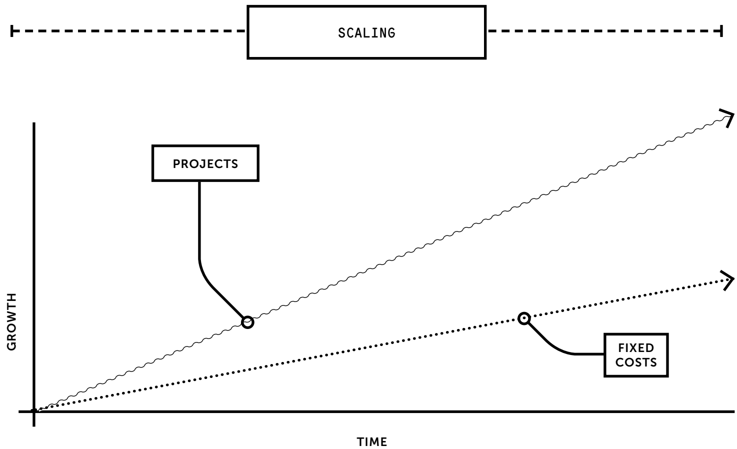
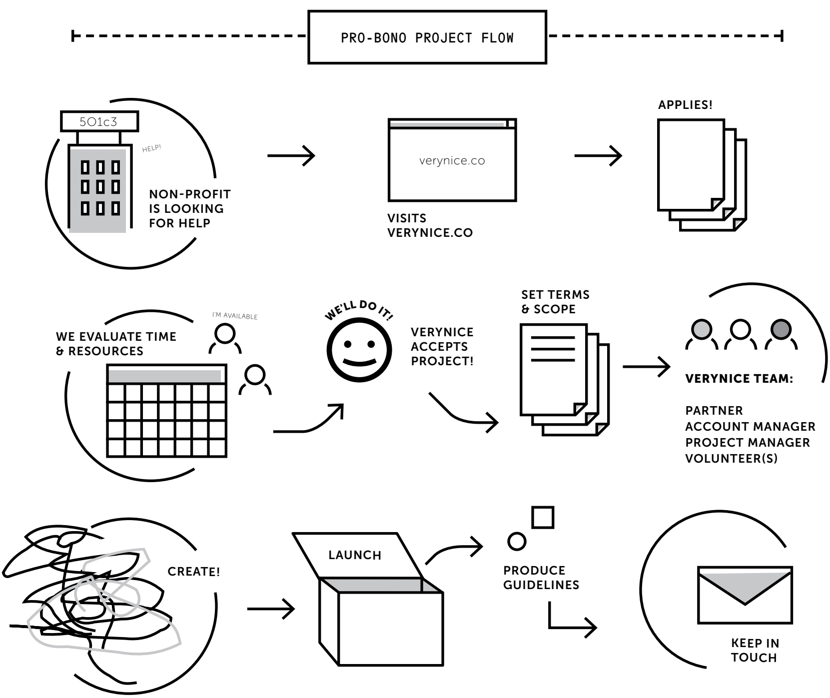
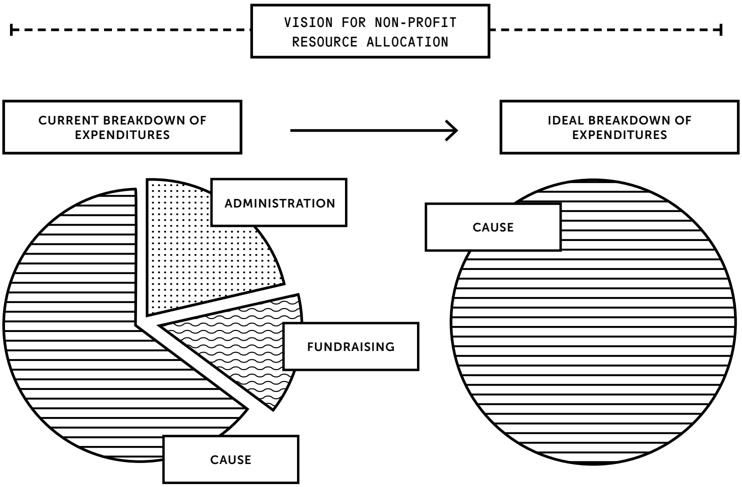
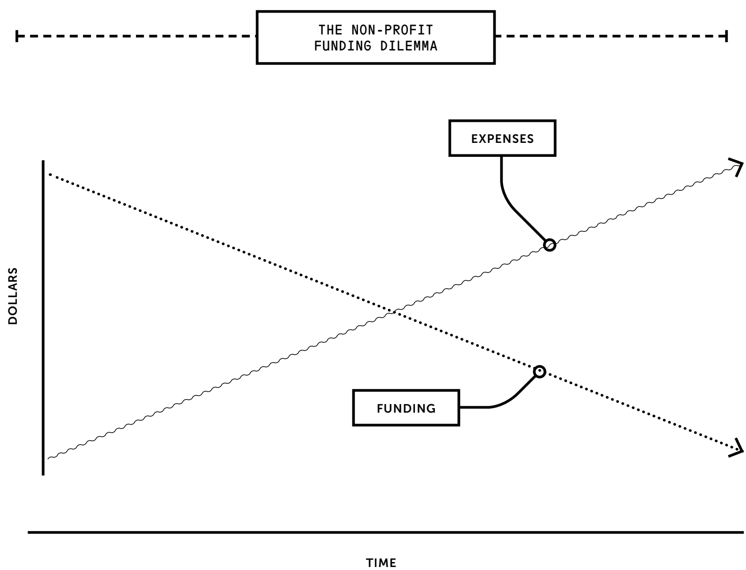


By leveraging a creative approach to outsourcing in your business, your capacity for projects can grow while your fixed costs can stay low.



IMPACT





Each year, non-profit funding decreases while expenses simultaneously increase. We need new models for philanthropy that can alleviate expenses for non-profits.

C. *Use-Case Scenarios*

1. LINDA, THE SMALL BUSINESS OWNER

Linda is the head of a small law practice in San Jose, California. As an attorney, Linda focuses on business litigation. She only has one full-time employee, and brings in a paralegal a couple of days per week to help out here and there. One day, Linda realized that there was a huge need for her services amongst business owners in a neighboring city, East Palo Alto, but that these individuals could not afford her services. As a result, she decided to institutionalize a 50% pro-bono commitment in which she would offer her services for free to the EPA region. Feeling fulfilled and excited by the idea, she decided to bring up her initiative to other lawyers that she shares an office with. They immediately were inspired by the idea and offered to help her out where and when they could. Next thing Linda knew, she had a bunch of colleagues to pull from, all who were willing to take on a pro-bono account every now and then under the umbrella of her small law practice. The business owners in East Palo Alto that received pro-bono legal advice from Linda Law were so grateful that they began to tweet about Linda and even tell friends in other parts of the Silicon Valley! Linda Law was then able to scale their practice thanks to the recognition she was receiving from her pro-bono clientele as well as the new relationships she was able to develop through collaborating with like-minded colleagues. Linda has been giving half of her work away for free for two years, but has been in business for a total of five. Prior to giving half of her work away for free, she was seeing an annual increase in revenue of about 50%. In the first year that Linda implemented her new business model, she did not see more than a 5% increase in revenue, but now that she is more comfortable with creative outsourcing, she has seen an increase in revenue of 75% this year!

2. CHAD, THE FREELANCE EDITOR

Chad was a college student in his senior year majoring in English Literature with a minor in Journalism. While in school, on the weekends and evenings, Chad enjoyed doing freelance work on the side as a writer and editor for local businesses and non-profit organizations. This work all started when Chad realized he was a bit restless in class. Hungry for some real world experience, he decided it was time to get more experience, paid or not. After doing some research into a variety of industries and sectors, Chad realized that smaller non-profits seemed to have a difficult time conveying their mission and vision in an accessible manner. As a result, Chad was able to determine the importance of creative language for a non-profit as a means to drive more donations and awareness. Chad was able to kick off this freelance career most intensely after having developed his portfolio through pro-bono work that he offered to small non-profits he found on craigslist. Now two years out of school, Chad has been able to sustain himself as a full-time freelancer. Chad's workload grew quite fast after college thanks to the substantial referrals he has obtained from his volunteer work, he quickly began to see an increase in annual revenue from just $5,000.00 in his first year of business to close to $75,000.00 in his third year as a full-time freelancer. As a result, Chad now occasionally employs friends and former classmates as both paid contractors and volunteer writers which have allowed him to scale his freelance editing business gradually. Thanks to his pro-bono work, not only has Chad been able to develop a hefty portfolio of editing work, he was also able to launch a career in writing.

3. MARK, THE IN-HOUSE DESIGNER

Mark is an in-house designer at an insurance company in Scottsdale, Arizona. While the company has over 100 employees, he is one of three designers. Mark finds that there is often down-time at his job since design is not necessarily a huge priority at his company. As a result, he decided to launch an initiative within the business in which he and the rest of his team would offer up their design services to a handful of non-profit organizations that the company is already supporting through their philanthropic and corporate social responsibility initiatives. Mark called his initiative "downtime design," and as a result the small team has been able to contribute design assistance to over 50 organizations in Arizona and beyond! While "downtime design" has not generated any new clear revenue streams for the insurance company, it has resulted in a significant increase in awareness and word of mouth marketing for the agency in appreciation for the great work Mark's team has produced for local organizations. The initiative was even featured in the local newspaper!

4. NATASHA, THE BIG BUSINESS OWNER

Natasha is a successful architect and engineer. She runs a successful business in Texas called Texas Home Vision LLC. The company employs roughly 200 people and generates over 150 million dollars per year in revenue. After learning about the 50% pro-bono business model, Natasha grew inspired by the idea that her design/build firm could adopt a similar methodology. Unfortunately, however, it became clear that pivoting her current operation toward a model like this would result in a massive loss for the company. Seeing as the business is already quite large, giving half of her work away for free would require laying off a substantial majority of her staff as well as downsizing in facility size. This was not a sacrifice that Natasha wanted to make. Instead, after 20 years, Natasha has decided to step down from her current role as Chief Executive Officer in order to launch a new non-profit wing for the business called The Texas Home Foundation. For every project that the primary for-profit wing takes on, this new foundation will take on a pro-bono project to help design and build something for an under-served part of the Texas community. While the foundation has only been up and running for about 3 months, things are already going great, and Natasha is feeling much more fulfilled in her new position in the company!

5. JASON, THE BOOT-STRAPPED ENTREPRENEUR

Jason is an entrepreneur on a mission to start his own consultancy. Without having the luxury of investment or a huge savings, Jason has decided to keep his company simple by being a one-man show in a shared office space. The cool thing? His clients have no idea that it's just him. By leveraging the #givehalf model's creative approach to collaboration and delegation, Jason is able to take on twice the amount of work he would have been able to do otherwise, which has even allowed him to take on a series of pro-bono projects in order to build his skill-set and work on projects he is passionate about.

d. *Iterations & Deviations*

At the core of the #givehalf model is a creative balance between impact and profit. This is achieved through an institutionalized approach to pro-bono work, which calls for 50% of a company's initiatives to be given away for free. Depending on the size of your business, the exact balance can have multiple meanings or iterations. The following is a selection of developments on the model from organizations that have created a strong balance between giving and getting.

Give	*Get*
PROJECT 1	PROJECT 4
PROJECT 2	PROJECT 5
PROJECT 3	PROJECT 6

Give	*Get*
PROJECT 1(½)	PROJECT 1(½)
PROJECT 2	PROJECT 3
PROJECT 4(½)	PROJECT 4(½)

Give	*Get*
PROJECT 1	PROJECT 2
BOARD SERVICE	RETAINER CLIENT
PROJECT 5	PROJECT 6

Give	*Get*
50%	50%
PROFIT/ REVENUE DONATED	PROFIT/ REVENUE INVESTED OR DRAWN

ILLUSTRATION BY ALISA OLINOVA

III. Toolkit Part 2: Frequently Asked Questions

Part 2 of our toolkit aims to open source the double half methodology through the revealing of answers to questions that have been sourced from entrepreneurs from around the world that are currently in the process of launching a business inspired by verynice's 50% pro-bono business model. We asked 20 entrepreneurs spanning 4 continents to send in difficult questions with the hopes of exploring the details behind different key components of the business model. Our prompt resulted in over 200 diverse questions that fell under a wide range of topics and scenarios that were relevant to each individual submitter. After finding a lot of common concerns and points of stress from each of our participations, we then narrowed the questions down to a total of 99 and categorized them into 11 categories including: the model, starting up, collaboration, incentives, branding/marketing, client relations, scaling/growth, policy making, quality assurance, risks, and common critiques. Our goal for this section of "*How to Give Over Half Your Work Away for Free*" is not to provide a heavily edited forum of the most amazing answers in the world, but to instead curate a series of honest inputs and best practices that have been learned over years of trial and error. Because this section of the book is very dynamic and rough, we do not see it as finished, and hope that this first publication will spark a lot of debate and follow-up questions. Please be sure to write us with additional questions, and you might see answers published on verynice's blog! blog.verynice.co.

a. *The Model*

While the model itself seems simple (double your workload, give half away), there are a fair amount of cogs that keep the machine turning. In this section of the Frequently Asked Questions, we will cover the primary components that make the model possible, who should use the model, who shouldn't use the model, why it is important for small businesses to be thinking about philanthropic models, the reason for giving 50% as opposed to 10 or 20%, and how the model will affect your current business.

A1 **What is the model, how does it work, and what are its primary components?**

Give over half of your work away for free by institutionalizing an ongoing pro-bono initiative that is an integral component of your business in order to provide your services to those who deserve it, while still maintaining happiness and profitability in your business. Put simply, the double-half methodology has been made possible through intensive development and iteration over the course of over 5 years that has resulted in a unique customization/combination of 4 approaches to business strategy: capacity building, business development, financial planning, and time management.

1. CAPACITY BUILDING

If you are giving half of your work away for free, you need to do twice the amount of work. That said, you need to not miss out on sleep. The model calls for a creative approach to capacity building that embraces remote collaboration and network development.

2. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The model allows for sincere and authentic client relationships that lend themselves well to project referrals. The model calls for a very intentional use of word-of-mouth as the primary marketing tool.

3. FINANCIAL PLANNING

Although the success of the model has no limits, monetarily, up-front there is going to be some sacrifice, as with any business. As a result, the model calls for a conservative approach to corporate overhead.

4. TIME MANAGEMENT

Because the model requires a high volume of projects at any given time, the development of time management processes that work for you are a necessity in the process of developing your verynice entity.

A2 Who is the model best suited for?

The model is designed specifically for independent contractors, freelancers, entrepreneurs, and small business owners that are offering a service. While we are interested in the product space as well, but this model is not designed for that space as there have already been many instances of successful giving amongst product-oriented businesses. If you do have a product, and you are interested in a model that has proven to be successful in its replication, please refer to the One for One model that has been popularized by TOMS Shoes.

The double half methodology is best suited for individuals and small collectives that are at an early stage, or seasoned entrepreneurs that are looking to make a big shift in their career for the greater good. The model was originally invented by Matthew Manos for his design firm, verynice, but is in no way limited to the design industry/creative fields. The model is open to any and all service providers including, but not limited to: designers, architects, consultants, lawyers, doctors, hair stylists, and more.

A3 What are the most unique features that make this different from other pro-bono models?

There are a handful of other pro-bono models out there, including intermediary programs, crowdsourcing, pledges of 1% of your time, and hackathon-style “marathons” that take place over a weekend. While all of these models have resulted in significant impact and awareness, none of them have been able to turn pro-bono into an integral component of business. Each of these models has kept the perception of corporate giving as something you do on the side as an “extracurricular.”

The most unique component of our model as opposed to these other models is that we have been able to make philanthropy a part of the day-to-day of your business while still maintaining profitability. The fact that this is a for-profit model also makes it stand out and allows for freedom from the restrictions a non-profit organization faces.

A4 Why do we need this model?

I've seen first-hand the struggles that non-profit organizations go through to keep their doors open every day. 90% of a young organization's time goes toward the writing of applications for grants that can allow them to pay for things like marketing, design, consultation, and a plethora of other services. According to the Harvard Business Review, annual design and marketing expenditures for all non-profit organizations in the United States alone come close to 8 billion dollars every single year. Those rates, and those expenditures, are only getting higher. It simply is not sustainable. Imagine what impact could be made if the need to allocate those financial resources to people like us (service-providers) were completely eliminated.

I know what you're thinking—*Oh no!* If we stop charging non-profit organizations, we will lose so much business! My answer to that concern (which I am confronted with often) is this: According to the SBA, there are 27.5 million small businesses. That makes up for 99.9% of businesses in the United States. As of 2012, there are 1.04 million non-profit organizations. If we choose not to profit off of those that do not seek to profit, we can make our money elsewhere, easily. By taking money away from a non-profit's budget to make impact, we are taking away from their potential to make impact. 1% is not enough, in my opinion, which is why we strive to create a model that dedicates over 50%, while still thriving as a company. I define an extracurricular activity as something we spend less than half of our efforts doing. If we want to get serious about making an impact, it is my sincere belief that we need to start making giving back an integral component of business, something that gets a lot of focus, not something we do on the side.

A5 How do I know if I'm a good candidate to apply the model to my business?

This model is only intended for adoption by a service provider, or service-oriented business. The model is not optimized for product-oriented business. The model is not intended for service providers with a very specific vertical, but instead favors those with a broad demographic/audience.

This model is not for anyone and everyone. It is hard, it takes patience. You will not get rich fast. The ideal candidate for the integration of this model is someone that is sick of working hours upon hours to sell, what Steve Jobs would refer to as "sugar water." You are a good candidate for this model if you are serious about making philanthropy in integral component of your day-to-day business. This model is not for the individual that is OK with stopping at 1%. This model is OK for the individual that wants to start with 1%, and then grow their impact exponentially.

A6 How is pro-bono a more valuable asset financially to non-profit organizations, in the long run, then monetary donations? What is the value of skills-based volunteering?

Pro-bono is a valuable asset to non-profit organizations because it provides them with a valuable resource that they would have spent at least a portion of their dollars toward anyways. Dollars can only take you so far, time and experience are multipliers in this industry. Beyond that component of pro-bono's value, it is also the most accessible way to create social impact. There are far more of us with valuable skills then there are people with extraordinary wealth. For small businesses and independent contractors, pro-bono really is the only possible way to give back to a non-profit organization at the same scale of impact that the big guys can have. When you are a billion dollar company, it is easy to give out a million dollars here and there. When you are making barely 6 figures, on the other hand, giving enough money to have any impact at all beyond a new set of office supplies is simply impossible. Pro-bono is your only chance to make an impact on an organization as a small business.

Anyone can clean up a beach. That's a simple task, and people have been doing it for years. Sure, we can continue to define 'service' and 'volunteerism' in that way, but wouldn't a more productive question be 'how can we ensure that beaches never get dirty again?' That is a big question, but it is one that can be answered by leveraging the unique talents each of us bring to the table. This isn't a new idea—it's actually a movement, the idea of skills-based volunteering. I believe that design has the power to answer big questions like that, and that designers have a unique ability to see the big picture in order to integrate sustainable impact in our daily lives.

A7 Will the model affect my current clients?

The model will not affect your current clientele, it will likely add to it, though. The model can be gradually implemented in a manner that can slowly introduce new pro-bono clients to build you up into the 51%+ pro-bono ratio. Keep track of your ratio as you go along. If you currently have 5 clients, 4 that are paid, one that is volunteer, gradually add at least 4 more pro-bono projects that you can be working on.

If your current clientele is primarily non-profit organizations, and they have already agreed to a billable scope, do not worry about paying them back the money they have already distributed to you. That will be too much of a hassle for them to work out on the accounting side. Instead, waive any and all additional fees that would have accumulated from future work.

A8 How long will the model take to implement? Is implementation gradual or immediate?

Years or minutes. The model can be implemented easily for startups, but can take more time for businesses that are already established in their respective fields.

1. STARTUPS

For startups, we recommend launching with a 100% pro-bono model, and then gradually introduce paid clientele as time goes on. We have found this implementation plan to be successful as finding clients that are willing to take a risk by hiring a less experienced practitioner (like a startup) is easier when there is no financial risk involved. Also, these non-profit engagements, as we will cover in the section on incentives, tend to develop a strong referral base that can help you build a network and find paid work easily. For more detail, refer to B6.

2. ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES

For established businesses, you will be launching with a 0% pro-bono model, and then gradually adding additional non-profit projects to your current project list. Implementation for an established business can take time, and therefore we recommend establishing a “pro-bono” plan that calls for an immediate integration of 10% pro-bono, and then over the course of a year, build yourself up to at least 50% pro-bono. For more detail, refer to B7.

A9 Can I add other elements to the framework? What components of the model are flexible?

Most of the model is not flexible as much trial and error has gone in to making it perfectly replicable and sustainable. That said, the primary component of the model that is flexible is the specific service being offered, the specific means of growing capacity, and the specific benefactor that will receive your pro-bono offering. We will highlight solutions to each of these components in the guide book, but they are in no means the only route to take in establishing a system that works for you.

A10 Really? 50% pro-bono? Why not 1, 5, 10, 20, 30, or 40?

This is a philosophical decision, not a logistical one. The model calls for at least 50% based on the belief that anything you spend less than half of your time doing is an extracurricular activity. There are many businesses out there that integrate varying amounts of philanthropy into their business, but to make a true impact, this model requires giving back to become an integral component of our daily lives.

A11 What role does outsourcing play in this model?

This model thrives off of the philosophy that remote working relationships are the future of business, and that we only go to an office because there is one. It is crucial to keep your in-house overhead as lean as possible. One major way to do this is to get comfortable with outsourcing a lot of the work and assuming the role of manager or creative director or facilitator (depending on your industry) in order to oversee all of the work that is being done. To clarify: this model is not a method of "crowdsourcing," instead; it is a model that thrives off of "outsourcing" practices. The primary difference is that crowdsourcing, by the very nature of it, is the production of work by a group of people that you do not necessarily know or have any need to engage with. Outsourcing, on the other hand, just leverages one or two people for any given project to get the necessary work done. Historically, outsourcing has been leveraged in this model for two types of contributors: volunteers + freelancers. The "short-list" of sorts that you create will consist of a group of people that you trust and enjoy working with. When you have a volunteer opportunity, you will leverage someone form that network as a volunteer to join you in your pro-bono efforts. When you have a paid opportunity, you will dip into that same network to hire an independent contractor/freelancer to work with you on that specific gig.

A12 How do you measure impact? Is it Quantitative vs. Qualitative?

The impact that the double-half methodology can allow for is purely quantitative. Your work as a service provider that is leveraging this model is a supporting role. You are not the star of an organization's impact, but you sure can make their impact possible. Qualitative means of measuring impact in the social good space is not something that is possible or productive with a model like this. Instead, the impact of your company is measured in financial and locational means. Keep a close tally of how much the pro-bono projects you are completing are worth. Keep an eye on where the organizations you are helping operate. By keeping a log of these two items, you will be able to know how much money you have saved non-profit organizations collectively as well as where the work that you have helped support is taking place.

A13 What are you giving away? Time? Effort? Projects?

The most common definition for what is being given away under this model is a project/initiative. For example, if your business typically takes on 10 clients at a time, you can imagine that five of those projects will be pro-bono endeavors. As a result, the amount of hours may or may not be proportional. This can be used to your advantage depending on the time of year, the flow of business, etc.

A14 I'm not in the creative industry; can this model still work for me?

Absolutely. This model, first-and-foremost, is designed for service-oriented business. This is a genre of business that encompasses dozens of fields and industries outside of the creative space. Are you in a business that sells your time as opposed to a physical good? Then this model will work for you.

A15 In what countries has this model been proven? Is it just an American thing?

A common misconception, for whatever reason, is that this model, or any pro-bono model for that matter, is limited logistically or culturally to the United States. This simply is not the case. The GiveHalf model, specifically, is being leveraged in close to a dozen countries across the globe. Pro-bono marathons happen internationally, and there are even intermediary programs abroad. If you cannot find a pro-bono community in your country, chances are you are the perfect person to start it.

A16 I really want to bring this model to my local community. Will that work?

Yes and no. Because the model relies on a heavy stream of projects to be taken on simultaneously, limiting yourself and your business to one specific community can be unnecessarily limiting. This said, it is not impossible. Prior to defining limitations on geographic reach, take a good look at your community— how many non-profit organizations are there? How many businesses? Understand that limiting yourself to one community, while noble, may not be the most scalable effort.

b. *Starting Up*

Whether you are in the business of giving half of your work away for free or none of it, starting up is never easy. In this section of the FAQ, we will cover how and when to commit to a 50% pro-bono business model in the early stages of a business, how to acquire experience in the non-profit sector, how to reduce fixed costs in a business, and how to gradually adopt a model in which you give half of your work away for free in a manner that makes sense to you and your business.

B1 What does it mean to "institutionalize" pro-bono? When should I do that for my business?

Pro-bono is "institutionalized" when it becomes an official component of a business plan. What this means is that a specific offering is set, announced publicly, and acted upon. Put simply, your pro-bono offer becomes a part of your elevator pitch. For example, my company is not "a global design and innovation consultancy." Instead, we are "a global design and innovation consultancy that dedicates over 50% of its efforts to pro-bono service for non-profit organizations."

For new practitioners in the pro-bono space, there can be a lot of anxiety around officially announcing the pro-bono component of the business. The primary source of that anxiety comes from a fear of getting overwhelmed and an insecurity of impact.

1. GETTING OVERWHELMED

A common concern in regards to publicly announcing a pro-bono program is the fear of an onslaught of interested clients. Unless you are a mega-popular celebrity of sorts, you will not have a million people knocking on your door the moment you hit "publish" on your site. If you do happen to experience this mass-quantity of pro-bono leads, however, there are ways to deal with it in a safe and mature manner. First, only agree to take on what you can handle. Second, don't be afraid to turn down a pro-bono lead. Third, if you are afraid to turn down a pro-bono lead, simply inform them of your specific start-date availability including when you would be able to complete the project, even if it is a year from this initial point of contact. If they are serious about your offer, and if they truly respect your work, they will wait for you.

2. INSECURITY OF IMPACT

The second most common concern startups share with me is what I like to refer to as an "insecurity of impact." What I mean by this is that many people lack confidence in the impact they have, or have not, created. To that I say this: everyone has to start somewhere. If you don't have a lot to show for yourself, make it clear what kind of impact you are hoping to have. If you don't have much experience in the social sector at all, start talking to people. Be humble and seek advice to make you stronger and better suited to create impact.

B2

B2: How do I decide the benefactor of my services?

The benefactor of your services is the person, place, or thing that is receiving your services for free. Who is benefiting from your services is the component of the model that is flexible as it is up to you to define who you are inspired to help. In many cases, the identified benefactors of companies that are leveraging this model have been selected very broadly. That said, there is definite value and opportunity in getting specific.

1. BROAD BENEFACTOR

Selecting a broad benefactor is the most common approach to the model as it allows for more flexibility and scalability in your business and personal interests. Being broad allows you to help a far larger group of people because there are fewer limitations on accessing your expertise. Being broad can also expose you, as a person, to many fields and sectors in order to help you form a wider range of specialty and interest. The downside of being broad, as is the case in any business, is that you have less focus, and therefore less tangible and specific expertise.

2. SPECIFIC BENEFACTOR

Selecting a specific benefactor can be an interesting route in your practice as it will result in a very dense depth of knowledge and expertise within a specific sector. The level of specificity can range dramatically. For example: All non-profits that focus on homelessness, all non-profits that focus on homelessness in Los Angeles, all non-profits that focus on teenagers that are homeless on 6th street in Downtown Los Angeles. Too much specificity can make it difficult for you to find work due to too many necessary qualifications. Too much specificity can also lead to a loss in interest/the potential of getting board in the work that you do due to a lack of challenge.

B3 What are some tricks I can leverage to keep my overhead low?

Keeping overhead low is a necessity in the leveraging of this model. So many expenditures in small business go far beyond the core competencies/necessities to run the business successfully. There is no room for that in this model! Business expenses fall under 5 categories: office supplies, rent, employees, marketing, and entertainment. There are ways to re-allocate funding for each of these 5 components that can help you run a tight, but comfortable ship.

1. OFFICE SUPPLIES

That Herman Miller chair is very tempting... but your ass will be just fine in that IKEA stool. Cut out a lot of the unnecessary office supplies by questioning what you need on a day-to-day basis. There is a good chance that 50% of the stuff you have in your office is used once every other month. Are there other ways to access those items? Do you print a lot? If not, can you print at Kinkos when you need it? Do you those magazine subscriptions have an online blog version? If so, can you cut out the subscription and just leverage your RSS feed? Buy only what you need on a daily basis. Borrow or rent everything else.

2. RENT

Rent is a big factor. We all want that big private office at the top of a skyscraper with awesome furniture, an Xbox, and a foosball table, but none of us need that. Co-working spaces are popping up everywhere, and they are a great resource for a business at any level as they often provide you with a private space, conference rooms, kitchens, and parking. Aside from that, they also provide community, and as a result, potential clients.

3. EMPLOYEES

There is a good chance that you don't need anyone on payroll. Get comfortable working exclusively with independent contractors and interns. This cuts out a lot of the overhead as it allows you to only get someone to help you with your work when you truly need it.

4. MARKETING

Marketing is something that you should invest in wisely. Invest in speaking engagements/conferences and social media. Launch a Facebook page, run an ad campaign every month for at least $25. Go to at least once conference a quarter. If you can land yourself a seat on a panel or maybe even a keynote speaking engagement, you get to attend for free, and you also get to look very smart. Treat your clients well, and be very forward with them by informing them that your business comes to you via word of mouth. If you do a good job for them, they will tell their friends.

5. ENTERTAINMENT

You do not need to take yourself out to lunch and dinner every night on your business card. Save it for a big client meeting with someone you want to really impress. If you really want to save money on client outings, but still front the bill, book meetings at an odd hour and suggest that you go out for coffee as opposed to lunch or dinner. It will save you, in general, $25-30.

B5 How do you get experience with the non-profit world?

This model does not require you to be an expert in the social sector, or in a specific cause. The model only requires you to be an expert in the service that you offer. This said, if you do want to get some hands-on experience with the non-profit world as a means to make yourself better equipped for the conversations that will result, simply volunteer for one!

B6 I'm a future founder/emerging entrepreneur. How do I launch this model?

For startups, we recommend launching with a 100% pro-bono model, and then gradually introduce paid clientele as time goes on. We have found this implementation plan to be successful as finding clients that are willing to take a risk by hiring a less experienced practitioner (like a startup) is easier when there is no financial risk involved.

To get started efficiently, if possible, account for a lack of income for the first several months of operation. Focusing all in on your pro-bono efforts in the beginning of your business is crucial as it will result in a strong reputation in the space and will also allow for significant networking potential. Use this as a time to build your portfolio full of projects that show off your full potential. Also use this as a time to meet people and develop a network of potential collaborators.

B7 I'm a veteran business owner that has a company that is already well established. How do I incorporate this model into what I am already doing?

For established businesses, you will be launching with a 0% pro-bono model, and then gradually adding additional non-profit projects to your current project list. Implementation for an established business can take time, and therefore we recommend establishing a "pro-bono" plan that calls for an immediate integration of 10% pro-bono, and then over the course of a year, build yourself up to at least 50% pro-bono.

If your business already has employees, make sure everyone is all-in on this pro-bono integration. Your entire team needs to be on board with this vision as it may result in some managerial adjustments to allow for an influx of projects. It is important to remember that this model will require a 100% increase in your company's capacity in order to maintain the same revenue stream that you currently experience. For example, if you are currently managing 10 accounts, by the time you reach 50% pro-bono, you will have to be managing 20 accounts. In lieu of this reality, you will need to find creative ways to increase the bandwidth of your operations by gradually getting comfortable with outsourcing techniques as well as time management/resource optimization techniques.

B8 Can this be done part-time or full-time?

The model is designed to work on a full-time, all-in, basis. This is the primary reason that the model is designed specifically to be a for-profit operation that calls for a balance of paid and non-paid work in order to allow for self-sustainability. That said, as with many startups and new businesses in general, the root of your success and launch can often found in part-time operation. If you are currently a student, or are currently an employee in another company, spend your nights building your network, and building your clientele and experience. When the time is right, take the leap into the full-time realm.

B9 Do I have to implement every component of this model into my business to create impact through giving half?

Not at all. The concept of "Give Half" is to set a high bar in order to influence other businesses to join in the intensive commitment OR come as close as possible. While there is a great chance that your business will be able to absorb the risks and sacrifices the #givehalf model brings with it, it is understandable that certain methodologies will just not be possible depending on your scale. "#givehalf," as a model, has been open-sourced through this book for a reason. We want your input and your contributions to show all possible interpretations of this model.

B10 What is the biggest mistake you made in the early days of starting verynice?

To be honest, there are too many to count, but here goes nothing:

> 01 - I took one year to implement proper agreements, proposals, and invoices for verynice's paid clientele. Then I took three years to implement proposer agreements and proposals for verynice's pro-bono clientele. These were my biggest mistakes. I've had for-profit clientele take my files and run without paying. I've also had pro-bono projects go on for years without an end in sight. Do not make the mistake of creating an agreement and proper proposal for your clientele.
>
> 02 - I took two years to be completely comfortable and open to non-electronic communication with clients. For whatever reason, I used to be very uncomfortable with in-person meetings or phone calls. Eventually I realized how crucial this was for our business, but even more so, how much more collaborative the projects felt.

C. *Collaboration*

Collaboration is a key component of the double half methodology as it allows a business to increase bandwidth in order to achieve a safe balance of paid and un-paid work. In section C of the Frequently Asked Questions, we will explore the logistics behind collaborating with volunteers, the implications of remote collaboration, the importance of outsourcing, and the motivations of those who are about to embark on a collaboration with you on either a paid or unpaid basis.

C1 How can I possibly get all of this work done by myself?

The model explicitly relies on an increased volume of output. Because of that, you might be wondering: How can I possibly get all of this work done by myself? The answer: you can't! Well, you can, but you won't sleep much. Instead of trying to be the sole practitioner in your practice, turn to others for collaboration. Get comfortable in assuming position of a manager/creative director, and do not feel the need to execute everything on your own for every project. This sounds simple, but it can be very hard, especially for creative types. That said, once you can discover the power of delegation in your practice, you will find that you are able to learn how to clearly communicate your own vision and innovative ideas on a much deeper level. This will make you more clearly spoken problem solver, and therefore a more valuable asset to your clientele.

C2 What are the logistics of the model, when it comes to collaboration?

The double-half method for collaboration is quite simple yet very innovative in its intentional application of the freelance/contractor staffing model to the volunteer space. Instead of having a heavy bandwidth in-house, much of the talent and pool for collaboration actually exists out of house. These freelancers, generally known as part of your "network" have two different use-cases. For paid work, specific members of your network that are a good fit for the project at hand are brought on board on a paid, project basis. This payment is determined upon the contractor's general rates and can be decided to be billed at an hourly rate or a project-rate. For un-paid work (the pro-bono projects), the same pool of individuals that exist in your network are brought in again, just as you would for a paid project, but they actually serve as volunteers and get no monetary compensation for the work. For more on the incentives for the volunteers in your network, please see C4. For more on management of remote collaborators, please refer to C5 and C6.

C3 What are the implications of remote collaboration? Why is that so key in this process?

Remote collaboration has a lot of pros as well as a lot of cons. However, the nice thing about this managerial strategy's cons is that all of them can be solved with the right precautions. The following are a series of things to prepare for when hiring remote people to work with you on a project.

1. RELIABILITY IS THE KEY.

Have you worked with this person before? If not, consider working with them on a very small project. Something that will require 2-3 hours of their time, max. After this initial

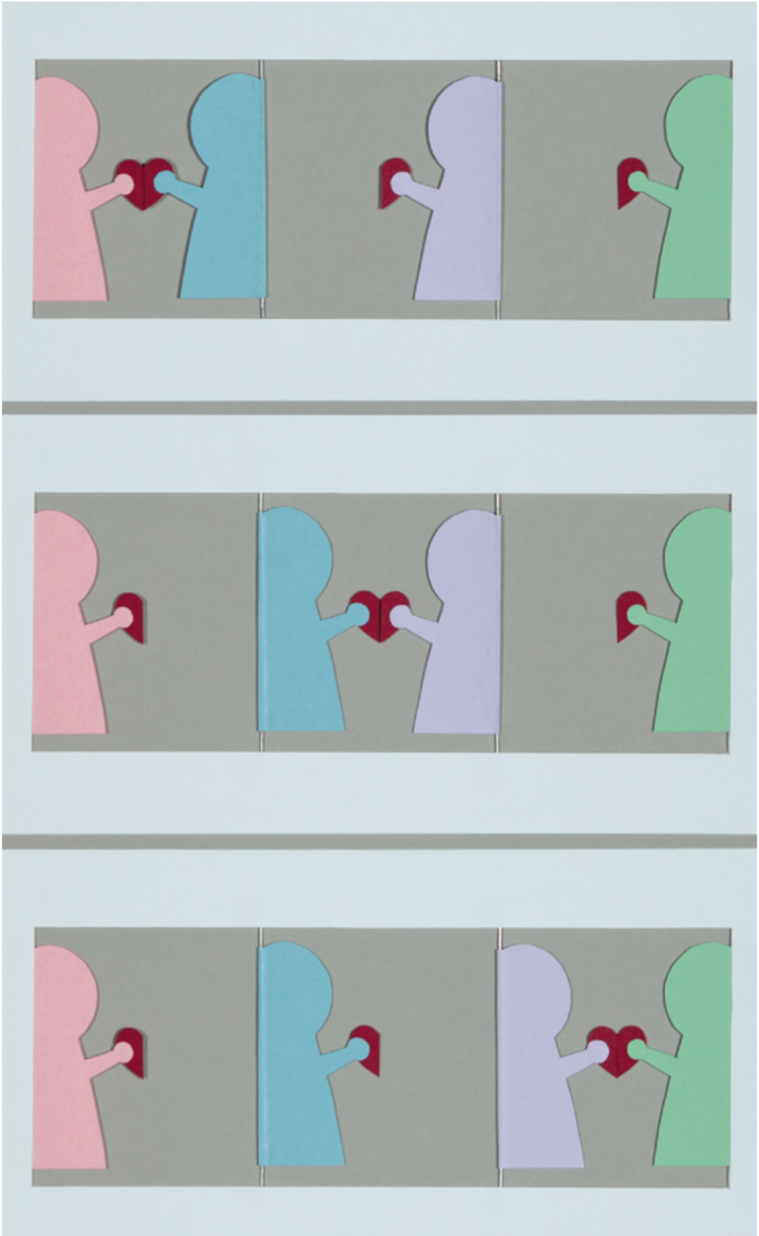


ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA FUNG

engagement with the collaborator, ask yourself the following questions: Did you enjoy working with them? Did they respond to emails in a timely manner? Were they easy to talk to on Skype/Google hangout? Did they do a good job? If you answered "no" to one or more of these questions, don't work with them on big projects. Consider sticking with them on small things every once in a while. If you answered "yes" to ALL of these questions, you have found yourself a strong remote collaborator.

2. CLOCKS SAY DIFFERENT THINGS IN DIFFERENT PLACES.

This may sound silly/obvious, but it is something that often goes unnoticed, initially. If you are in Los Angeles, and you are working with a collaborator in China, there is a good chance that you will have to wait upwards of 12 hours to get a response to an email, or to see any reaction to your feedback. This is not a bad thing, necessarily, but it is something to consider when planning the overall timeframe for your project. If you are working with a collaborator that is extremely far away, you may want to reserve them for projects with longer timeframes.

3. HAVE A BACK-UP PLAN.

Things can change pretty quickly in a freelancer's life. When recruiting/beginning to work with a contractor or volunteer, have a personal conversation with them about their situation. Are they between jobs? Are they a permanent freelancer? Are they an employee somewhere? If the individual is between jobs, it is likely that they are actively applying for other full-time positions simultaneously while working with you.

While the previous three items can seem stressful and intimidating, they are simply a part of the reality of working with people on a remote basis. Don't worry though, it isn't all scary. The positive implications of remote collaboration are vast.

1. REMOTE COLLABORATION DIVERSIFIES YOUR AESTHETIC.

By working with a collaborative network, the aesthetic of your output has a better chance of carrying a more diverse range of stylistic and/or strategic approaches. That is a given as it is no longer just you executing the work. Something that many don't realize, however, is that working with a remote collaborative network that is based all around the world can bring with it even more interesting aesthetic and/or strategic implications. When you are working with a staff that spans multiple countries, all of a sudden, your practice/company is able to carry the wright of multiple cultural references and inspiration. This can result in a greater body of work.

2. REMOTE COLLABORATION WILL BRING YOUR OVERHEAD DOWN.

The company that the double-half method was pioneered within has the operational capacity of almost 200 people, but it only has the overhead of about 2 people. This is a prime example of the power that collaboration, and a freelancer model at large, can have on a business. By bringing people on a project basis, you are only paying out salaries when you know you have the money in hand.

C4

What is the motivation for volunteers to take part?

The model relies heavily on openness to collaboration. One approach to this collaborative effort that has proven to be successful is a hybrid freelance/volunteer model. On paid projects, all parties involved in the given task(s) receive monetary compensation. On pro-bono projects, all parties involved in the given task(s) work as volunteers and receive no monetary compensation. It has been discovered that the best way to acquire volunteers is to allow them to find your company organically. Generally this strategy results in strong collaboration that is built upon authentic intention. That said, a frequently asked question in regards to the logistics of this model inquires about the motivation/incentive for the individual volunteers that take part in the projects. The motivation ranges depending on age group. Let's break that down into 4 age groups: High School, College, Early/Mid-Career Professionals, Seasoned/Retired Professionals.

1. HIGH SCHOOL

For high school students that are working with you on a volunteer basis, they are motivated to take part due to an opportunity to receive mentorship and hands-on experience in a professional setting. Many students at this age are eager to learn as much as they can so that they can make an informed decision around what college major to select. This can be a valuable experience for them to learn, and for you to become a better teacher.

2. COLLEGE

Many college students are looking to develop their resume and professional experience to better prepare them for "the real world" when they graduate. Unpaid internships are a common sighting, but many of those opportunities do not provide a legitimate reason for not providing proper compensation. A volunteer opportunity, on the other hand, that allows students to not only learn, but also give back to society at large, is a position that no student would want to pass up on.

3. EARLY/MID-CAREER PROFESSIONALS

People that are early in their career, or a bit further along, often hit a burnout phase in which they question the meaning of their work. For professionals at this stage, there is a lot of interest in finding a new outlet in which they can focus their creative energy on the weekends, or in the evenings. Many people in this demographic are also exhausted by the idea that much of their 9-5 is spent in the interest of helping sell stuff as opposed to give back to society.

4. SEASONED/RETIRED PROFESSIONALS

For volunteers that are toward the end of their career, many are interested in philanthropy and giving back as a way to leave a positive legacy on their career. For many, especially those that have done well for themselves, money is not a priority, and instead finding happiness in continuing a practice that has low pressure is a priority.

C5 In general, what are some tips for working with people remotely?

Working with people remotely requires a high level of comfort on email interaction as well as Skype, Google hangout, and other platforms for online collaboration. It is important to remember that phone conversations and in-person meetings may not always be possible. Getting used to conversing over the internet is your best bet.

C6 How do you manage volunteers and ensure that they meet the necessary deadlines even though they are not getting paid?

When you are managing your external network for the purposes of a volunteer project in which all parties are not receiving monetary compensation, you have to value the volunteer's time over your own time. It is crucial to work within the schedule of the volunteer and make their life as easy as possible throughout the process. Putting yourself and your own schedule second to the volunteer's will result in a more fruitful experience for your collaborator resulting in a high possibility of instilling a desire for them to help you out again on future projects while simultaneously inspiring them to do the best work they can. In the very early stages of a pro-bono project, be sure to include your volunteer on all communications with the client. Allow the volunteer to work with you to set deadlines that work for them. It has been found that when the volunteer is involved in the process of setting deadlines, they have a much higher likelihood of actually meeting those deadlines.

C7 Can my small business just crowdsource the work or act as an intermediary?

Sure you can, but chances are you will not do it correctly. Working in a crowdsourced method, or as a "middle man"/intermediary will increase your bandwidth for work by multiples, but it will not allow you to create a strong consistency in the process or outputs of your team. It will also limit your control in an engagement, which can have severe financial repercussions. Instead, we recommend that you, or someone who is part of your core team, always serve as a hands-on director or manager of each project. This will help you avoid the pitfalls that can result from a more hands-off role.

d. *Incentives*

The first thing anyone asks when this model is being described or leveraged is "so what do you get out of it?" This section of our FAQ aims to answer just that by confronting the strategic side of things. In "incentives," we will explore reasons why giving half of your work away for free is actually good for business, how pro-bono work can actually attract paid clientele, how the model can help you differentiate your business from others who offer similar services, and how the model can help you feel fulfilled by enabling your business or initiative to create social impact.

D1 What are the incentives of this model? Why would I give half of my work away?

While the model's roots are in pure altruism, as time went on, I began to realize the strategic benefits of giving work away for free. These incentives reside in three spaces: personal, educational, and professional.

1. PERSONAL

Let's face it. The excitement of spending your 9 to 5 creating marketing campaigns that have the sole purpose of helping some big corporation sell a few more bottles of soda wears off quickly. A major incentive of the model, one that is not necessarily measurable, is a contribution to your daily happiness. According to a study by Delivering Happiness At Work, 72% of Americans claim to be unhappy at work. No matter what you do, questions of your own meaning and contributions to the world at large can come about. The nice thing about this model is that you are constantly giving back to people that really deserve it, making you an instrumental piece in the puzzle of social impact.

2. EDUCATIONAL

Though it is not often brought up in client conversation, the reality behind helping someone out for free is that you get more creative/intellectual freedom that allows you to challenge yourself immensely. Often times, when you are a hired professional, you are not challenged. Instead, you are asked to deliver what the client knows you can do perfectly, every time. There is very little room for risky maneuvers, or dipping into completely new territories as a service provider. Pro-bono work, on the other hand, often lends itself well to openness for experimentation and risk.

3. PROFESSIONAL

Something that many people do not realize is that non-profit organizations and do-gooders at large are extremely well connected. These people are blowing up twitter and Facebook, and they have executives from billion dollar companies sitting on their boards. Furthermore, the majority of small non-profit organizations are comprised of a staff that is entirely there on a volunteer basis. This means they all have jobs elsewhere. All of these attributes of small non-profits lend themselves very well to the development of extremely viable and promising networking opportunities.

D2 How can I leverage my pro-bono work into attracting paid clientele?

As touched upon briefly in C1, non-profit organizations are extremely well connected. There is major opportunity for networking and business development in four avenues: `Public Relations, Staff Relationships, Board Relationships, and Karma.`

1. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Non-profit organizations and do-gooders in general, tend to have very strong social networking reach due to the attractiveness of the stories they are telling on a day-to-day basis. If you are helping out an organization, and you notice that they have a strong reach, ask them to tweet or Facebook about you here and there. It will result in an entirely new audience for you to be promoted to, and will also directly raise your own following.

2. STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

Most small non-profit organizations are comprised of a staff that is 100%, or pretty darn close to 100% volunteer-based. Why does this matter to you? That means they have "day jobs" elsewhere. Get to know the members of the staff that you are engaging with on a personal level. They can become very valuable basis for referral down the road.

3. BOARD RELATIONSHIPS

A seat on the "board" of a non-profit organization is a position that attracts a very accomplished demographic, one that is often comprised of business executives in major companies. In many cases, getting access to these kinds of decision makers can be impossible, but by working with a non-profit, you are hands-on with these heavy-hitters. Leverage these relationships for potential referrals as a way to land very large projects.

4. KARMA

This is the most obvious reality. If you are doing good things, people will want to support you. This is not something that you can design for. Do good work for good people, and you will be rewarded.

D3 How can the pro-bono and paid work influence/enhance each other?

Something very interesting about working across two completely different sectors (private + public) is that you are able to cross-pollinate your strategies and methodologies to deliver very valuable, and unique, advice to each sector. For example, if you are a consultant that is strong with business development in the private sector, you can leverage some of that knowledge to help a non-profit think more like a business. On the flip side, if you have gotten very good at marketing a cause for a non-profit in a very unique manner, perhaps you can leverage those same techniques in the private sector to forge partnerships to create a big impact.

D4 What are the long term competitive advantages of this business model?

In regards to long term competitive advantages of this model, the primary component is the networking that will occur. As you work for more and more non-profit organizations, and get more and more volunteers involved in your efforts, you will exponentially grow your network. As time goes on, this will only get bigger, not smaller.

D5 How can I leverage this model to differentiate my brand from competitors?

Much of the success that we have all witnessed in the social enterprise space is the attraction of people and companies that are doing well. While this might be confused for a trend, it is a long lasting competitive advantage, especially when your company is being compared to another similar studio/agency/practice that is offering the same services and quality work as you, but without the social good component. When a potential client is faced with the decision to work with two equally qualified companies, they will choose the one that is contributing to society, every time.

Take web design, for example. Put yourself in the shoes of the client. If you are looking to spend around $5,000.00 on a new website for your startup, would you rather give it to a traditional for-profit agency, or would you rather give that money to someone that is going to put it towards good use for society at large? It is a no-brainer!

D6 How does this model benefit my whole business?

We touched upon this in point #2 of D1:

> "Though it is not often brought up in client conversation, the reality behind helping someone out for free is that you get more creative/intellectual freedom that allows you to challenge yourself immensely. Often times, when you are a

> hired professional, you are not challenged. Instead, you are asked to deliver what the client knows you can do perfectly, every time. There is very little room for risky maneuvers, or dipping into completely new territories as a service provider. Pro-bono work, on the other hand, often lends itself well to openness for experimentation and risk."

This point in particular is a very unique strategic component to working on projects that you are not getting paid for. The amazing thing about this component of the model's implications is that you are able to prove the capabilities of your business and more easily enter new segments within your industry do to your ability to prove yourself. The best part: there is no risk.

D7 What are the potential profits?

The potential profits are only limited by how hard you work, and how strategic you are with overhead. In general, service providers are able to maintain much more profitable businesses in comparison to product-oriented business due to the fact that you relay do not need anything more than yourself and your laptop to get started. Over the course of 5 years, verynice, the company that originated the double-half methodology, has been able to maintain an average profit margin of 65-70%.

D8 What is the potential social change?

Beyond networking and business development advantages, this model of course offers another incentive, one that is at the core of its intentions: the ability to create social change in this world. This said, it is crucial to understand the extent of your impact. As a service provider that is working with clients, you are able to create impact by supporting the impact of others. Your work is not saving the world. There work is. It is really important to understand that, and to be OK with that reality.

D9 My company is huge, but the in-house department that I work in is pretty small. How can I convince my boss that we should give half?

For years, pro-bono has proven to be an incredibly valuable tool within larger companies. Our friends at Taproot have done significant research on this topic as part of their programs for pro-bono program development within corporations. The following are some highlights from their materials.

An effective pro-bono program maximizes both business value and social impact; including Increased Community Impact, Human Resources, Reputation, and Innovation.

01: INCREASED COMMUNITY IMPACT

Enable your community partners to expand their own impact by building their capacity to deliver their critical services to the community.

02: HUMAN RESOURCES

Pro-bono programs are great drivers of professional development, increasing employee satisfaction, enhancing recruitment, and creating a more interconnected workplace.

03: REPUTATION

These programs help you expand your network, improve brand and public relations and/or strengthen your sustained license to operate.

04: INNOVATION

Pro-bono projects can help foster a climate of innovation, result in new or improved products, and/or expand into new markets or enhance your current market penetration.

ILLUSTRATION BY CRISTOFER BERNABE-SANCHEZ

e. *Branding/Marketing*

Branding and marketing is at the center of a service provider's ability to grow their business and expand upon their client base. So how is the leverage of traditional branding and/or marketing tactics different for a business that happens to be giving over half of their work away for free? In this section of our frequently asked questions, we will define when exactly it is safe to start promoting your pro-bono commitment, what role statistics play in the marketing of a 50% pro-bono business model, tips and tricks for explaining your business in the time it takes to go up a few floors in an elevator, and how to leverage your philanthropic efforts to your advantage when attracting clients and the media.

E1 When is it safe to start talking about my offering? How much should I emphasize it?

It is recommended to announce and emphasize the pro-bono offering as soon as possible in any and all marketing materials, and branded materials at large for your company. The pro-bono offering should be your primary differentiator statement, and therefore should be present at all times, even in your elevator pitch.

E2 What role do quantifiable statistics play in my marketing?

A website that is built on a pro bono basis cannot feed an impoverished nation, but it can save a non-profit organization upwards of $20,000.00 which is money that can be reinvested into their own impact. In doing so, the money you saved the organization can then create direct impact for the organization. You should always measure your social change/impact in this manner. The core of measurement strategies with this model is that is must be quantifiable, not qualitative. Your impact can be measured in a number of ways, but is always represented by gross impact, not annual, quarterly, or situational. Consider the following methods for quantification:

1. BY TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS.

How many hours has your business volunteered, collectively? This can really add up, and can be a fun statistic to leverage through comparison. For example, verynice has donated enough hours, collectively, to equal over 2 years of working without sleep. To push this further, depending on your sector, you can create specific value comparisons that are relevant to your industry. For example, if your business offers filmmaking services, you might want to compare your donated time to "the equivalent of watching the Titanic sink 500 times." If you are a sound production company, you might want to compare your donated time to "the equivalent of 1000 dark sides of the moon." If you are in an industry that does not commonly refer to their work by the hour, but instead by the day, week, or month, adjusts accordingly.

2. BY TOTAL DOLLAR AMOUNT.

The total equivalent dollar amount of your pro-bono donation can be really eye-opening and rewarding. Especially as your business hits major milestones such as the $100k mark, the $250k marks, etc. While time never changes, value does. Choosing to go a direction that relies on projecting your equivalent dollar amount can require maintenance, as your rates and project values may change. As your rates change, you should be mindful of the effect it will have on the value of your gross donated time. Be sure to recalculate to provide the most up-to-date answer!

E3 How do I explain this model to a skeptical audience?

This model is very simple to explain to an audience that is familiar with the social enterprise movement, and socially conscious business at large. However, it can get tricky when a more traditional audience is confronted with the model as it can be difficult for a non-socially-conscious audience to understand why you would ever want to give away that much work for free. The best way to explain the model to an audience like this is to focus primarily on the benefits/more immediate financial returns the model allows for. As we mentioned in section D of the book, this model has benefits that are personal, professional, and educational. Please refer to section D of the book for an in-depth look into the benefits of this model.

E4 What is a sample elevator pitch for a business operating with this model?

The elevator pitch is crucial to the success of a business. The goal, traditionally, is to clearly communicate what you do, and who you do it for. Rarely, however, does an elevator pitch call for the entrepreneur to state why they do what they do. Answering that question is at the core of this models' suggested elevator pitch by bringing a bit of purpose into that one or two sentence statement. Here is a template that you can follow as well as a hand-full of examples:

1. SHORT ELEVATOR PITCH

[YOUR BUSINESS NAME] is a [BUSINESS TYPE] that dedicates over 50% of its efforts toward pro-bono services for [RECIPIENT].

Ex. 1: verynice is a global design, business, and innovation consultancy that dedicates over 50% of its efforts toward pro-bono services for non-profit organizations around the world.

Ex. 2: Kimmy's Cuts is a full-service hair salon that dedicates over 50% of its efforts toward pro-bono services for women living on skid row in Los Angeles.

2. LONG(ER) ELEVATOR PITCH

[YOUR BUSINESS NAME] is a [BUSINESS TYPE] specializing in [SPECIALTY /GENERAL FOCUS]. We dedicate over 50% of our efforts toward pro-bono services for [RECIPIENT] because [PROBLEM]. We exist to [SOLUTION].

Ex. 1: verynice is a global design, business, and innovation consultancy specializing in brand and digital product development. We dedicate over 50% of our efforts toward pro-bono services for non-profit organizations around the world because non-profits in the United States alone allocate close to $8 Billion for design and marketing expenses every year. We exist to alleviate those expenses in order to allow these organizations to reallocate those dollars toward impact.

Ex. 2: Kimmy's Cuts is a full-service hair salon specializing in fashionable hair styling and coloring for women. We dedicate over 50% of our efforts toward pro-bono services for women living on skid row in Los Angeles because these women deserve the same level of care and fashionable treatment as everyone else. We exist to bring confidence and a sense of empowerment to all women, regardless of their economic status.

E5 How do I attract my pro-bono clientele?

Small non-profit organizations, more often than not, do not have a budget in place for acquiring talent. In lieu of that reality, they will very often turn toward free online resources, think craigslist, to find people like you to help them. Create an offer on craigslist, and search through the current job postings under “creative > gigs” if you are in the creative field, or other appropriate sections of the site’s listings, if you are in a different industry. Please note that pro-bono clientele are much more forgiving of lack of substantial experience. Use this as an opportunity to grow. Search for projects that are challenging. It is one of the key benefits of pro-bono work, as seen in Section D.

After building a significant reputation in the social sector, you will find that very little work on your end will have to be done to acquire new pro-bono business. Through word-of-mouth marketing, press, and social media, organizations will flock to you. The social sector is a very small world full of interconnected synergy amongst non-profit leaders. Get your foot in the door and watch your network grow!

E6 How do I attract my paid clientele?

There are many methods that can be leveraged to attract paid clientele including social media, conference attendance/participation, and word-of-mouth marketing. Please refer to D2 for a more in-depth look into the possibilities of attracting paid clientele with this model.

E7 How do I attract the media and general public? Is having a back story important?

By the very nature of it, Social Enterprise naturally gives legs to a compelling story. As social entrepreneurs, we are already, openly, dedicating our lives to challenging business as usual through unique strategy, and authentic intention. While I may not know you personally, I already can assume that your reason for having interest in launching a business like this goes beyond the desire to be a self-starter with control over your own hours and obligations. You are a social entrepreneur because you are compelled to help, to give back. More often than not, that feeling of obligation you have, and the reason you are leveraging the power of business for the greater good, is because of a personal experience you may have had. It is natural that others that cross our path, upon hearing our story, will be compelled to share it. This is not a new idea, and it is already done very well as a marketing tool for many social enterprises.

Take TOMs for example – In his book, *"Start Something that Matters,"* Blake Mycoskie, the founder of TOMS tells a story about his time in an airport. TOMS had just recently launched, and he noticed a woman in line at the terminal in front of him wearing a pair of his shoes. He tapped her on the shoulder and complimented her on the shoes, asking about them. Without hesitance, she turned to him, without knowing who he was, and shared the entire story of TOMS – how they came to be, the cause they fight to help, and the uniqueness in their philanthropic business model.

Think hard about your reason for launching a career like this. There has to be one. Find a way to tell that story in an engaging manner through an array of mediums including your website, social media outlets, and brand messaging.

SAMPLE STORY (AS USED BY VERYNICE)

Every year, non-profit organizations in the United States alone allocate close to $8 Billion towards marketing and design expenditures. Imagine what could be accomplished by these organizations, collectively, if a spare $8 Billion was left on the table. verynice dedicates over 50% of its efforts toward pro-bono service in order to do our part to eradicate these expenses for non-profit organizations so that they can reach the full potential for their impact.

E8 I have no credibility, how do I build this?

If you are just starting out with this model and have very little experience in your specific industry/sector of business, you will be perceived as naive. Everyone says they want to "change the world," but very few can articulate how they will change the world, or why they feel the world needs changing. Even if you are young, or new to this line of business, if you are able to reflect on the "how" and "why" in regards to your desire to "change the world," the fence of naivety will brought down, and you will rapidly gain respect in and out of your industry.

Everyone starts with nothing, but everyone has the ability to create something. It just takes time—start very humbly, and say yes to every opportunity that comes your way, even if it is horrible, because that opportunity, and that connection, can lead to millions of things down the road.

E9 Why would people believe us?

Unfortunately the "do good" space has a lot of social stigmas around it. People love to hate on the do-gooder. It is a pain in the ass, but it is also a reality. When just starting, ignore the nay-sayers. There will be a lot of them. I can't even quantify the amount of spit I had to wipe off of my face over the course of the first 2 years of verynice. What I was building really offended some people, and also made a lot of other studios and agencies feel uncomfortable because I was introducing a new kind of accountability. After proving the model can work, however, I simultaneously proved myself. In doing so, people believe me now, and they will believe you, too.

E10 How do I become part of the speaker circuit?

Kicking off your inclusion in a speaking circuit is challenging, but valuable. Speaking at conferences either in the role of a keynote speaker or a panelist or a workshop facilitator is a huge opportunity for you to build your credibility, no matter how small or big the conference may be. A speaker is seen as the authority on a given topic, and therefore is respected by attendees (well, as long as the speech isn't absolutely terrible). For many of us, speaking is a scary thing. We gave presentations while taking classes in high school and college, but speaking to a total group of strangers can be incredibly intimidating. This said, remember that it does get easier with experience. The first few times that you find yourself in a speaking role, you will be nervous primarily because it is new to you, but also because the content you will be delivering is new as well. While speaking requires a refinement of content in order to perfect your delivery, there are certain aspects of your speech that can be templated and replicated across any and all events that you might find yourself at. Be conscious of the templatization of your story in order to gain confidence on a specific component of your speech. Even if it is just 5 slides that you find comfort in, that is huge in building overall confidence as a speaker.

Beyond just building the credibility of your business, speaking can also land you new clients and collaborators that you would not have been able to find otherwise. Leverage these unique opportunities to present yourself well, and not only will you see an eventual financial return on the new relationships you will form; you will also undoubtedly enter what is called the "speaking circuit." Very often, when the curator of an event is in the midst of planning their guests of honor, they will attend events in the area that are similar in scope or theme in order to get inspired and find potential speakers that may be a good fit for their own event. By doing a great job and really shining in your seat as a panelist or keynote speaker, you will very likely receive an invite or two to yet another conference. The pattern continues and, before you know it, you are booking an event every month!

E11 Should I solicit pro-bono work?

I recommend soliciting your work and offering your services in the beginning to get things rolling. Once you have developed a strong enough reputation, however, let your clients find you. It will result in sincere excitement and appreciation for the work as well as a higher perception of value for your work. In the early days of verynice, in an attempt to meet as many non-profit organizations as possible, I would solicit the studio's pro-bono services on Craigslist. Eventually, however, I determined that soliciting pro-bono work did not have nearly as much return as unsolicited work. When pro-bono work is solicited by the practitioner, the deliverable's value is severely diminished, and the engagement itself is forced.

f. *Client Relations*

In the service-business, the perfect approach to client-relations is always undergoing iteration. Challenges come and go, and new methods for conquering those challenges effectively come and go as well, but what new challenges arise when you are giving half over your work away for free? This section of our Frequently Asked Questions titled "Client Relations" will reveal just that. In "Client Relations," learn what questions you need to ask at the very beginning of a pro-bono relationship, how to set a scope and an agreement with your benefactor in order to avoid the drama that results from misinterpretation, and how to create an infrastructure for yourself in order to withstand the demands of your clients while still being able to produce quality work that leads to additional referrals.

F1 What questions should I ask the non-profits that apply for my services?

We have found that confronting an interested pro-bono service recipient with a list of questions that they are required to answer up-front actually serves as a great barrier that reduces many applicants that are not serious about the services. Aside from that bit of inconvenience, this list of questions can also help you determine if the applicant is legitimate. In the early days of verynice, we did not have an application form or questionnaire of any kind, and just took clients as they came. Unfortunately for us, we quickly discovered that when you are offering very valuable services at no cost, you will occasionally run into a person that is trying to take advantage of you. Believe it or not, we have had a few applicants pose as non-profit organizations. Luckily, thanks to our perfected application questions, we have been able to weed those fakers out of the system! The following is a list of questions you may want to consider asking your applicant:

1. What is your organization's name?
2. What is your name, email address, and location?
3. What is your role within the organization?
4. How long have you been with the organization?
5. Is your organization a 501c3 non-profit, or the equivalent if outside of the United States?
6. Tell us about your organization. What is your mission? How is your work impacting the world?
7. Educate us about your cause. What is your personal connection to the cause?
8. Any significant accomplishments you have made that you want us to know about? (optional, but encouraged!)
9. Where do you see your organization in 10 years?
10. What kinds of problems is your organization facing right now?
11. What kinds of services do you think you might be interested in? How might we be able to help?
12. What is your rough timeframe for the project? Why?
13. How did you hear about us?

The purpose of these questions is to not only eliminate those that do not have serious interest, but also to help you get a better understanding of the organization's current impact, dreams, aspirations, problems, etc. so that you can begin to form a handful of assumptions around what you might be able to offer the organization as you begin to develop a more in-depth conversation with the organization.

If you are choosing to be selective in who you give your services too (for example, only environmental causes, only Los Angeles-based organizations, etc.), then this application can also help you eliminate those that do not qualify for your services.

F2 How do non-profit organizations perceive pro-bono service?

I want to start by saying that close to 80% of the non-profit organizations that have approached verynice throughout the years have done so without any apprehensive feelings. That said, something that surprised me in the very early days was that quite a few of the non-profit organizations that were approaching our studio were afraid of the pro-bono offering. The fact that we were not getting paid immediately made them think we would be slow on turnaround, we would not be able to make the deadlines they set, and we would not do a good job for them. Of course none of these concerns are true, but all of these concerns are realized through bad experiences each of these organizations have had in the past and/or are influenced by the landscape of giving in the corporate scene.

F3 How do I help a non-profit organization feel comfortable working with me on a pro-bono basis?

As mentioned in F2, there is a stigma to a handful of non-profit organizations, especially large ones, toward pro-bono services due to concern around project focus, change-orders, and deadlines. When you run into an issue like this, or are confronted with a concern like this, it is important for you to help the organization understand that everything will be OK with their project. You need to make them feel comfortable.

A very simple and proven method for helping a non-profit organization feel safe working with you is to assemble a schedule for the project right off the bat. Please note that if you provide a schedule like this, it is very important that you make sure that you meet the deadlines. Another very simple method for helping a non-profit feel as though you are committed to their project is to actually write up a very simple contract/agreement between you and/or your company as well as the organization. Treat a pro-bono client in exactly the same way you would a paid client, because the sentiment that “you get what you pay for” is not applicable in this kind of client engagement.

F4 What infrastructure do I need to ensure that I am ready for a heavy flow of potential pro-bono clients?

You do not need any infrastructure whatsoever to ensure you ready for a heavy flow of potential pro-bono clients. One of the beautiful things about being a service-oriented business as opposed to a product-oriented business is that you do not need to worry about having a stock of "inventory" laying around waiting for interested people to pick it up. You need only take things on/agree to do them when you have the bandwidth to do so.

That said, if you are interested in implementing an infrastructure for this kind of scenario because you want to accept a heavy flow of pro-bono clients, you need to increase your bandwidth and social production network. For more specific strategies around scaling, please refer to section G.

F5 How many projects/clients should I be taking on?

The amount of total projects/clients you should be taking on, or setting as a goal for your consultancy is highly dependent on the following factors: overhead, profit goals, bandwidth/resources. We will walk through each of these scenarios, but the most important thing to remember is that at least 50% of your projects/active clients need to be for free, if leveraging this model. In lieu of that, your active project minimum must be at least 2.

> 1. OVERHEAD. If you have a business with a high overhead, you are going to need more projects in order to make ends meet. Alternatively, you can also find ways to keep your overhead low by leveraging a co-working space for an office, cutting out the things you don't really need, and more. More strategies to keep overhead low can be found in section B3.
>
> If you have a business with low overhead (i.e. just yourself, interns, etc.), then consider setting your profit goals low in the beginning, and very gradually escalate the amount of work you take on. For example, in the first year that verynice implemented this 51/49 model (note that from 2008-2010 we were operating as 100% pro-bono and then 70/30 while experimenting), we were taking roughly 5 clients on at a time. The next year that escalated to roughly 15-20, as our resources and bandwidth grew upon acquiring more interested contractors and freelancers. Currently, as of 2013, we are averaging 35-40 projects at a time. We have found this slow build of projects combined with a slow build of expenses to be very easy to plan for.
>
> 2. PROFIT GOALS. Obviously if your end goal is to make the

most money possible, you are going to have to take on as many projects as you possibly can at one time. That said, trying to become a million dollar business right away does not work with this model. Set your profit goals low, but be hard on yourself to meet those goals. Every quarter, raise those profit and revenue goals, and meet them. Soon you will be surprised by what you were capable of, all without any upfront investment to make big leaps fast.

3. BANDWIDTH/RESOURCES. It might seem obvious, but I'm going to say it anyways: the higher your bandwidth, the more work you can take on. While this does seem simple, many consultancies do not think in this manner. It is much more common to have a high bandwidth, and put all of that energy toward very few projects. This model, instead, calls for always hitting a ceiling of some sort in terms of capacity. If you have the resources and the bandwidth (i.e. a large network, etc.), use it to its maximum capabilities.

F6 Do I need to charge my paid clientele extra in order to compensate?

There are two potential methods to subsidize your pro-bono work:

01. Double your current project load.

02. Double your rates for your paid clientele.

While the decision is up to you, the preferred direction is not to double your rates, but instead to double your work load. The main reason that this is the preferred method of subsidization for all of your philanthropic work is that it will lead to a less limiting client base and, in doing so, will make your services more accessible to small businesses and startups.

F7 How do I set a clear agreement and scope with a pro-bono client?

Just as an agreement and full understanding of the scope of work involved in a paid relationship, the same is necessary in a pro-bono relationship. Actually, it is arguably even more important because when you are perceived as a generous individual, it can be easily assumed that you will always be generous and therefore say “yes” to everything asked of you.

While it can be difficult to say “no”, especially to something you are emotionally invested in, it is crucial, and the limits of your offer will be understood. If an organization is not respecting your limitations, or if an organization is not interested in what you have to offer, don't fight it! Better luck next time. Whenever an organization gets in touch with verynice, we assess their situation and, if we are interested and available, we send them an offer that highlights the specific timeframe and scope of work we are willing to give to them pro-bono. In most instances, this scope and timeframe is not negotiable and the organization is asked to either accept or decline the offer. This method of initial engagement, we have found, actually very successfully sets an organization's expectations around the engagement and therefore makes it known that, while we are generous, we are busy people, and we have rules and structures to our relationships. Doing this will help position you as a person of authority, and therefore, will create a perception of value around your time and your work.

F8 How do I ensure that I will not be overworked or taken advantage of?

As mentioned in section F7, a very clear scope/agreement of workload for each pro-bono project is crucial to have at the very beginning of a project. Putting a set of policies in place for yourself and your business can also ensure that you are not being taken advantage of by very clearly stating for yourself and your clients what you are willing to give away as well as who you are willing to give that away to.

verynice learned this the hard way in the early years by actually not clearly stating what specifically makes and organization or individual worthy of our pro-bono offer. As a result, we found on multiple occasions that very profitable organizations were actually taking advantage of us in order to save on costs and, therefore, profit more off of the product or service that we were developing for them. As a result of those negative experiences, we instituted a rule for ourselves to only offer pro-bono service to 501c3 non-profit organizations. Ever since, we have not experiences an instance of feeling taken advantage of.

F9 How do I set a timeframe for non-profit projects?

The success of your work in the non-profit sector is often something that can only be measured after quite a lot of time being hands on with a given organization. That said, you can't always commit to a year long engagement, and sometimes all you can fit into your schedule is an hour long phone call. The good news: this model allows for flexibility in engagement due to the fact that the 50% pro-bono measurement is based on a commitment of projects, not necessarily time.

The key moral to the story regarding timeframes, however, is not necessarily that it is something that is under your control, but instead that it is something that has to exist. If you do not set a specific timeframe on your pro-bono engagement, it will not end, and it will become harder to end. This is something that you need to clearly state at the beginning of each project in order to have the benefactor completely understand the scope of your offer. If you do not clearly state this scope, and if there is no scope that is agreed to, it will be assumed that you are always available to the organization. If you happen to want to always be available for anything and everything, good for you. If not, know that that would be the expectation.

F10 What systems can be put in place to streamline pro-bono leads?

Pro-bono leads can be streamlined through developing an online application form for the benefactor to populate. This application form, similar to what we have on verynice's contact page, will keep your pro-bono leads organized and easily searchable. That said, this is only one way to organize leads, and the specific direction that works best for you should be reflected upon and committed to on your end.

Once you have committed to a specific system for collecting pro-bono requests, do not deviate from that system. There have been instances in which we have received phone calls, text messages, personal emails, and even office visits from organizations that are interested in our pro-bono offering. In those instances, we have been very upfront in informing the pro-bono lead that they will not be considered for our pro-bono offering unless they fill out our application form online. While it can sound harsh and is a bit awkward to say in the beginning of launching your business, it will save you a lot of headaches and further work to establish yourself as a professional.

F11 How do you define a scope for a pro-bono client?

The needs of each client are like a thumb print. No two organizations need the same things, everyone has drastically different problems! For verynice, we use a process that starts with examining an organization's current problems in order to allow us, as professionals, to make the best call possible in regards to what solution we can offer for them. In the early days of verynice, we would always ask the organization what they wanted: a logo, website, a business plan, etc., but in more recent years we have found that by asking an organization to tell us what they need, they are already assuming the best solution possible for their problem. Part of our job, as consultants and service providers, is to get to the bottom of our clients' problems in order to define the best solution (and therefore scope) for the work.

F12 I'm really busy with pro-bono projects and can't take on another one, but I'm afraid to hurt this non-profit's feelings... what should I do?

Saying "no" is the most difficult thing you can do. I say "no" all the time, probably a dozen times per week, and every single time my heart is broken – it does not get easier. However, you have to remind yourself that it is for the best. If you are already at the maximum capacity of your pro-bono commitment, stretching yourself too thin can only result in something bad— including financial constraint, a lack of time to deliver quality work, and a feeling of burnout that kills inspiration to move onward.

F13 Should I always offer a non-profit organization pro-bono work?

Who, when, and what you offer as pro-bono is entirely dependent upon the pro-bono policies you have put in place and will differ from company to company. At verynice, we offer every non-profit organization pro-bono services. Depending on our current resources and availability, that may not be for every component of the non-profit's needs. As a result, we occasionally will offer some of our services at no cost, and others at a non-profit rate to cover minimum expenses. In other instances, we have been approached by non-profits who actually refuse our pro-bono services from the beginning. When this happens, we still do not request a certain dollar amount and instead invite the non-profit to let us know the specific budget for their project. This often is a rate that is below our market standards.

F14 In my side business, I tend to only take on one client at a time. How can I still give half?

This model has inspired many side-projects and "night owl" small business owners, and many of these entrepreneurs take on very few projects at a time. For this kind of entrepreneur, we recommend either attempting to take on two projects at a time (one paid, one unpaid), or alternating between pro-bono and paid work to achieve your balance. Chances you are making your living at a day job, so alternating between profit-generating projects and impact-generating projects is more than possible.

g. *Scaling/Growth*

OK so you've got this whole "give half of your work away for free" thing down and are thriving as an individual freelancer. Now, how do you grow your operation in order to allow for more success as a business, or more work in general? What does it look like once you have actual fixed costs? How can you further grow your bandwidth in order to take on more clients and therefore allow for more revenue and impact with the work you are doing? Is this a model that allows for fast growth? Or is it meant to be a bit more gradual then a typical business? Those are topics we will explore in this section.

G1 Is this model scalable?

The short answer: yes. This is a model that verynice has leveraged for over 5 years, and it is a model that has allowed us, as a business, to double in both revenue and staff size each year. That said, this is not a model that at this time, is fully optimized for the kinds of scale that a $10MM organization can sustain. This is a model that is designed to thrive in businesses that are run by sole proprietors, general partners, or small teams of 10-15 people.

As verynice grows, we will likely add an addendum to this book, or an additional section of sorts that sheds some light on best practices for a massive corporation to leverage a 50% pro-bono business model, but in the meantime that is not a knowledge base/understanding we can claim to have.

G2 How can we profitably run a business if we're using paid clients' money to pay for pro bono work. How does it all balance out?

A common misunderstanding around this business model is that money made from paid client work is actually being used to cross-subsidize the pro-bono work. This idea is built on the assumption that the pro-bono work executed under this model is accruing overhead for the business, but that is not the case. Instead, the model calls for a unique staffing model in which the majority of the staff is remote freelancers/contractors that act as volunteers for the unpaid/pro-bono engagements. As a result, there are no hard costs beyond your own time in order to get the pro-bono work done and, therefore, your volunteer efforts are not a drain on your resources, and are not a hindrance on your company's potential for scale.

G3 What are reliable methods for increasing my bandwidth?

The most reliable means of increasing bandwidth is to begin outsourcing a selection of your work and/or specific tasks that you yourself are having a hard time finding the opportunity to get to yourself OR that you realize you are not the best person for the job. No matter what your specific industry is, there is always a clear set of tasks that fall under the category of "production" along with another clear set of tasks that fall under the category of "management." As the head of an organization or business that is giving over half of its work away for free, using the double half methodology, you should see yourself focusing as much of your effort as possible on management as opposed to production. This will allow you to scale your efforts dramatically and, as a result, take on far more work as a business.

G4 What does an average week look like, managing something like this?

As an entrepreneur or a founder or a partner that is tasked with launching and/or scaling a business with a 50% pro-bono business model, a large chunk of your day will be allocated towards marketing and self-promotion in order to attract clients and talent. On any given month, I will personally make an appearance through a speaking role in an average of 2-3 conferences. Not only do these appearances give the company exposure and spread our mission of pro-bono services, it also allows us to attract new volunteers and contractors (if talking to a group of designers), as well as non-profits (if talking at a social sector-oriented venue), and even paid clientele (if the gig is at a startup conference or corporate summit). When we are not spending time at physical events, we are also pushing hard through our social media outlets and various media channels to get the word out about what we are currently working on in order to maintain our public presence as much as possible.

Aside from consistent self-promotion, another big part of the day is management. With a model that requires a heavy load of networked collaboration, you will absolutely find yourself in Google hangouts or Skype calls quite frequently.

G5 Should I just be outsourcing this work and walk away?

A common misunderstanding amongst business owners that are new to outsourcing is the idea that you can simply delegate the work and walk away from the project. This is very far from the truth. In fact, if you do take on a perspective on management like this, you will indeed face some serious drama with your clients. See Section 15 of this toolkit to learn more about the risks of outsourcing.

Under the double half methodology, outsourcing should not be seen as a means to an end, but instead as a way to better disseminate your vision for a given project or client engagement. While the work itself may not be crafted by your own hands, the overall strategic and/or creative direction that the work is built upon is indeed created by you. Outsourcing is difficult in the beginning, as it requires a unique ability to explain your concept and vision for a project well to someone else, but the fact that that is necessary alone will make you a better leader.

When you are working with a volunteer contractor on a pro-bono project, you should always put their time before your own, and you should always be prepared to take over their work should something arise. In lieu of this, you need to always be in full control of each of your projects in order to fully understand the status and needs of each pro-bono engagement to allow you to make quick decisions and have a deep effect on every component of the project.

G6 Am I going to have to work twice the amount of hours with twice the amount of work?

At the highest level possible, the concept of the double half methodology, as a business strategy, is to double your workload. In theory, if you double your workload, you should be twice as busy and therefore you should be working twice the amount of hours that you would be if you were at a more typical workload. Lucky for you, however, this is not the case.

When the double half methodology was first conceived, the concept of "double the work" was the scariest component of the business model that makes giving over half of our work away for free possible. In the early years of verynice, we literally had to skip sleep to get all of the work done. However, in more recent years, the model has been iterated upon thanks to the realization of these pain points in order to address the issue of long-hours for those of us that would like to get some sleep. This model calls for a unique staffing method in which the business owner is able to pull from a pool of resources that are available to them via contractor hours and/or the recruiting of volunteers to assist in the production of a given project.

Managing 20 projects takes about half the time that producing 20 projects takes. As a result, this model calls for the head of the business/

any "permanent staffers" to take a more managerial role as opposed to the role of a producer. For example, at the time of writing, verynice has roughly 30 projects. I am personally managing about 15 of those, and my partner, Bora Shin, is currently managing the remaining 15. The reason we are both able to leave the office by 6pm is the fact that we have 1-2 volunteers and/or contractors that is on board for each of those 30 projects in order to take direction from us as managers and then produce under the umbrella and brand of verynice.

G7 What strategies for project management can I leverage?

Please reference section I6 to learn more about the current tools on the market for project management as well as to learn a bit more about how verynice manages our projects.

F13 What are the benefits of remote collaboration?

Aside from allowing for more bandwidth, the use of remote collaborators in your business can offer a lot of inspiration and unique thought leadership to help uniquely position your business amongst the competition.

This competitive advantage comes from a collaboration across cultures and disciplines which offers insight and inspiration that can't be found when working alone in a closed off room or cubicle. Only upon sharing control over your work and the final output of your vision will you be surprised by the outcome of a project.

G9 How do I ensure that I do quality work?

The market is filled with shitty products. Left and right we will find products that are not meant to last long, or products that are just inferior to their competition. We know that the bulk pack of crackers that we picked up at COSTCO is not nearly as great as the 6 pack of organic crackers at Whole Foods, but we buy it anyways thanks to the affordability of the item. The product business is the only business in which quantity and/or affordability outweighs the quality more often than not.

In the service business, quality is key. While some consultants are less talented or experienced than others, no one will purposefully hire a crappy designer or lawyer. They always want the best work possible. While the double half methodology is very much about quantity, no

ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL EVERETT

service-oriented business can possibly survive by producing poor work. Ensuring that you are doing the best you can on every single project that gets thrown on your plate is central to your success.

For more specifics on the importance of quality assurance in a business that gives over half of its work away for free, please reference section I, and for a specific look into the challenges of quality assurance in pro-bono work, please reference I9.

G10

How do I find pro bono volunteers?

verynice started as a side project in which I would volunteer the new skills I was acquiring in design school on the nights and weekends. For the first entire year of verynice, I did not promote the company or talk about it much publicly. After a year of developing my portfolio, I finally created a free website for the company using Cargo Collective, a publishing platform for creative professionals. The moment the site went up, it got a little bit of traction in the creative community and, as a result, we got on a blog here and there. After we got our first feature online, something crazy happened: I got an email. The email was from someone I had never met before who happened to be on the complete opposite side of the country. She was a graphic designer who was working as a full-time designer and strategist at an accomplished firm out of DC. The subject of her mail read "Connecting about verynice," and the body expressed her interest in collaborating on a volunteer basis with the studio in order to help us in our efforts to provide free design services to non-profit organizations. This email completely took me by surprise as I had never even once contemplated the idea of opening up our studio to the help of other professionals. The result of this very first relationship between me and a volunteer of course greatly influenced our business model and ever since we have always welcomed the generous support and offerings of those within and just outside of our personal network as a business.

In honor of that first email coming as a big surprise, we have kept a strategy for acquiring volunteers that is quite laissez-faire in that we actually never solicit the need for volunteers. We find that the solicitation of aid for a cause, as we see with strategies such as canvassing, is successful in finding support, but is also incredibly unsuccessful in finding authentic support. Very often when a volunteer is confronted by someone who needs help, they can quickly feel uncomfortable. This pressure that is forced upon a potential volunteer can often result in participation that is actually not authentic. A lack of authenticity behind the motivation of a volunteer will greatly affect their performance in an engagement, and will almost never result in an end product that is satisfactory, let alone exceptional. This is precisely why verynice does not solicit volunteers and instead keeps our door open for others to let themselves in. That is right: 100% of verynice's volunteer base has approached us entirely on their own, purely because they want to take part in our vision.

Now, I know what you are thinking: "hey, great tips Matt... So now I'll just sit around in my apartment and wait for people to get in touch, right? Awesome." Yeah, OK so at first this advice may not be the most actionable, but here is the thing: there actually are ways to attract the right types of volunteers while simultaneously avoiding solicitation all together.

1. VISIT UNIVERSITIES AND/OR COLLEGE CAMPUSES. A great majority of verynice's volunteers come from school visits that myself, or a member of the verynice team will make in order to simply share our work or give a guest lecture on a relevant topic. Students are always looking for opportunities to practice what they are learning in the real world, and are consistently confronted with unpaid internship opportunities. What better way to spend your time then to actually donate it for a good cause?

2. JOIN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS. Aside from speaking at schools, professional associations can also be a good place to meet potential volunteers. While the majority of verynice's volunteers are students, the close runner up is early-mid career professionals that are looking for a new outlet for their sanity.

3. SOCIAL MEDIA. Social media marketing is a big part of what we do to indirectly attract new clients, but it is also a great way to meet potential volunteers. Talk loudly about your mission and vision, share your work and ideas, and you'll be surprised by who it gets in front of.

G11 Should I hire people to get the model working?

Absolutely not. At verynice, we did not make our first hire until the business was roughly 4 years old. Instead of hiring permanent staff members, hire temporary contractors to help you get work done as it comes in. This is key to alleviating the up-front investment required to get your service-oriented business off the ground.

If you are fortunate enough to have attracted funding from an investor and are about to launch a business with the clear strategy of hiring employees up-front in order to scale fast, invest in an extensive management team and continue to outsource production work to key contractors and freelancers.

While the level of comfort in regards to bringing on a full-time staff member on to your team is different for every business owner, I personally tend to be quite careful and conservative. As a company, verynice only began to accrue fixed costs such as an office space or part-time staff after having brought twice the amount of revenue needed to cover the specific costs over three consecutive months.

G12 How do we get employees to champion their own causes or pro bono projects?

Everyone has a cause that they are emotionally invested in. As your business begins to grow, and you begin to acquire a staff of individuals that are all in on your business and vision to use your talents and expertise for the greater good, welcome an open conversation around the causes that matter to each of your team members. After learning what is at the heart and soul of each of your team members' values, seek out causes and projects that align with those values and delegate accordingly. Doing so will help your team maintain a strong sense of personal fulfillment in their day to day operations.

G13 My company is too big to give half of our work away for free. How can we still give half in other ways?

Companies can give half through many strategies and avenues, regardless of size. This can include a combination of pro-bono models including traditional contract services as well as board service, general skills volunteering (mentorship programs, etc.), financial contributions, etc. Depending on the scale of your business, you may find it possible to reach the 50% balance through a unique combination of employee giving programs and pro-bono work.

It should be known, however, that this model was created to set that bar high in an attempt to inspire other companies to do the same, or come close. If you can only create a series of programs that add up to 10%, do it. If you can get to 25%, awesome. If you can get to 50%... welcome to the club.

h. *Policy Making*

The beautiful thing about being willing to run a business that gives over half of its work away for free is the fact that you are able to call all of the shots and determine your own rules for who deserves your pro-bono offering. Setting strict policies around your offer can help you maintain a high level of enjoyment and organization in the volunteer work that you will embark on. In "Policy Making," learn what initial communications look like with a non-profit, get tips on who you should consider giving your work away for free to, explore sample policies that have proven successful amongst businesses that are operating under this model, and explore ways to keep your head above water when times get tough and the work gets heavy.

H1 What do initial communications look like with a non-profit?

After a non-profit organization gets in touch with you, assuming you have already evaluated your schedule and the bandwidth of your resources in order to determine that you are, in fact, capable of accommodating the project, the first order of business is to determine the specific scope of your offering. When an organization gets in tough with you, they will likely make suggestions of the kinds of services they are looking for, but it is up to you, as a professional in your given industry or sector, to realize which of your services (if not all of them) are actually needed by the organization at the moment of time in which you will be engaging in the work. After this scope is determined, internally review the scope and ensure that it still fits within the availability of both your time and current available resources. If it does not, refine the scope to a more realistic level of engagement and then present it to the benefactor. It is crucial to understand that the specific scope must be determined at the very beginning of an engagement with the benefactor of your services. While the scope can, and most likely will, be adjusted over the course of your project, if you fail to set the expectations for your collaboration up-front, the timeline and workload will very quickly spiral out of control and you will, worst case, find yourself running on fumes or, even worse, paying out of pocket to get the work off of your plate.

After the scope is set with your benefactor, the next topic of conversation is timeframe. Very often when someone is receiving something for free, they will feel awkward setting specific milestones for the projects or requesting set delivery times. While that is quite attractive for you in regards to flexibility, it is not ideal in the long run as it will result in projects that drag on far longer than they are worth. Remember to always have a timeframe for every project you take on, even if it is not requested of you, and then meet those deadlines!

While scope and timeframe are the most typical topics of initial communications with a non-profit (or any benefactor of your services), other topics of conversation can include a discovery phase in which you get to know the benefactor better in order to fully understand their needs and the context for your relationship.

H2 How do I deal with equipment rentals or other overhead that is out of my scope?

The nice thing about having policy making at the center of a philanthropic business model is that you get to define what you will and will not give away for free. While the service-business by definition operates in the exchange of knowledge and time, every once in a while hard costs such as equipment rentals, shipping charges, printing fees, etc. will come up that need to be addressed. At verynice, we do not offer to cover these hard costs, and we do not endorse others who leverage the business model to do so either. However, whether you do or do not intend to offer to front the money on the hard costs of your pro-bono engagement, you need to define those terms with your client up-front so as to avoid any negative surprises that may arise from your work. For example, there was one instance in the early days of the studio in which we designed and developed a website for a non-profit organization. When the time came to upload the final files to the organization's server in order to make the site live and accessible to the public, there was quite an awkward silence followed up by: "I thought you guys were going to host us, too?" While this incident eventually got resolved, it did result in some costs to the organization that, while small, were not budgeted for. Make sure that you avoid this kind of scenario by providing the benefactor of your pro-bono services with a breakdown of any and all hard costs prior to project commencement so that they can set their expectations and fundraise if necessary.

H3 Should, or should I not, be selective in the sectors I work in on a pro-bono basis? What about on a paid basis?

For your pro-bono work, it is entirely up to you to define who deserves your services at no charge. This does not have to be limited to non-profit organizations, and can easily be adapted to models that choose to work with individuals as well. However, this flexibility can also result in uncomfortable scenarios in which you are going to be asked by pro-bono leads: "Why don't I qualify for your pro-bono services?" If you do not have an answer to this question, you are going to find yourself in a pretty awkward situation. Avoid this all together by explicitly stating on your website or other marketing materials the type of clientele you offer pro-bono services to.

For paid work, this model typically thrives in situations that are more inclusive as opposed to exclusive due to the fact that really any paid project is of high value to your business regardless of budget or sector. That said, should you choose to select a strong and specific vertical to focus your efforts, be sure to do research to ensure that your market size is substantial enough to support you in the long run.

H4 What if a nonprofit has the budget and wants to pay me?

Just because a non-profit organization has a budget does not necessarily mean that you should charge for the work. The mission and vision behind the double half methodology is to alleviate expenses for nonprofit organizations, or change-makers at large depending upon your benefactor, so that they may reinvest their valuable resource into their impact and cause. Under the founding principles of this business model, you should always first offer to make your services available for free to the organization in order to collect their reaction around the idea. For more information on what to do if an organization refuses your pro-bono offering, please reference the next section, H5.

H5 What do I do if a nonprofit refuses my pro bono offering?

There is a lot of stigma in the nonprofit sector around pro-bono work. It may sound shocking, because it certainly came as a surprise to me, but a lot of organizations are uncomfortable receiving services at no cost. The reason is because many organizations, especially more established ones, have very tight deadlines to work with and, as a result, are afraid by a potential lack of commitment from the service provider due to the absence of a financial exchange. If this comes up in conversation with the organization that you were originally offering your services to for free, you should still do you best to make them as comfortable as possible with the concept of pro-bono by offering to create an agreement that both parties would sign in order to have a paper trail of agreements when it comes to timeframe or scope. If the organization still refuses the concept of pro-bono, it is up to you how you would like to proceed. At verynice, we have it in our policies (see! policies are important!) to have the non-profit actually name their price by specifying the budget they are looking to spend on the given project. We then avoid any negotiations and simply do it for the price that they asked for. If an organization does not have a budget in mind, and insists that we provide them with a bid for the project that is extremely low, typically no more than $100.00 in order to make them feel comfortable thanks to the presence of some sort of financial exchange.

H6 Is "pro-bono" always synonymous with non-profit work? Can I consider work done for for-profits with a good cause to be pro-bono work?

In section H3, we explored the idea of selectivity in pro-bono work. As mentioned there, the specific benefactor of your pro-bono services is entirely up to you, and does not at all have to be limited to the non-profit sector. That said; remember that anyone outside of the non-profit space will benefit from your work in the form of profit. Be careful not to get trapped giving your work away for free just so that some other business can split a bigger Christmas bonus. That is not fair to you!

H7 In what case can discount work/"partial pro-bono" play a role in the for-profit space?

Pro-bono work, as an offering, can manifest itself in two different ways: full pro-bono and partial pro-bono. Full pro-bono is simply an engagement that is discounted at a rate of 100%. What this means is that the benefactor has no financial obligation to you for your services. Partial pro-bono, on the other hand, is the result of a partial discount as opposed to a full discount, and can often be used as an extension of your philanthropic work in order to extend your impact across other disciplines and sectors.

At verynice, we always offer our non-profit clientele services at a full pro-bono (meaning free) rate, but often times we will actually extend this offer to for-profit social enterprises through discounted services up to 50% off of our standard rates. This hybrid paid/pro-bono deal allows us to help out businesses that are doing well in the world while simultaneously covering the costs of our immediate expenses and time for the project. It is what some might call a win-win! As you are establishing the policies around your pro-bono service offering, consider how a partial pro-bono model might fit into the work that you are doing by plotting who deserves a full discount as opposed to a partial discount for your work.

H8 What do I do if there are more pro bono clients than paid clients?

After verynice was first featured on GOOD Magazine, we acquired 50 new volunteers and had 20 non-profit organizations apply for our pro-bono services. Out of excitement, we ended up accepting every single one of those organizations. As a result, our pro-bono to paid ratio was a bit over 80% pro-bono. This was an exciting, yet difficult time for the studio! The best advice I can offer for someone that has found themselves in a similar situation to the above scenario in which you actually have more pro-bono project than paid projects is quite simple... suck it up, finish the work, and put a hold on accepting further pro-bono work!

i. *Quality Assurance*

It doesn't matter who you are, or how nice it is that you are giving over half of your work away for free. If you are not producing good work, you will not be successful in the world of service-oriented business. Because this model calls for a high quantity of work coming in and out of your theoretical office, assuring a high level of quality can be difficult. In this section of our Frequently Asked Questions, I will teach you how to keep a balanced schedule that allows you to create the best work possible while still maintaining the quantity that you need to survive, recognize when and why you should say "no," and how to avoid an outsourcing disaster.

11 How can we balance the demands of business development while still doing pro bono work?

At verynice, we have a whiteboard up on our wall that, at all times, displays our current pro-bono to paid client ratios visible for all to see. What this does for us is keep a visual and constant reminder that we should or should not be even thinking about taking on new pro-bono projects, or vice versa. Having this ratio in front of you at all times will help you avoid many potential speed bumps that result from an irresponsible balance of pro-bono and paid work.

12 How do I draw the line between paid and unpaid offerings?

The clients you choose to offer your pro-bono offerings to versus your paid offerings to is heavily reliant upon the policies that you chose to set around your offer. While verynice elects to offer our pro-bono services to any organization so long as they are a 501c3 organization, you can choose to get even more specific in your offering. Just as who you offer your pro-bono services to be flexible, the specific service(s) that you choose to make available pro-bono are also up to you. Just because you offer web design services to your paid clientele does not mean you absolutely have to offer those exact same services to your unpaid clientele. That is the clear deviation that this model promises from the one for one model. The needs of each of your clients are very different. There are no two clients in the world that have the exact same expectations, so your offering doesn't have to be the same, either. In order to draw the line between your paid and unpaid offerings, simply set policies for yourself and stick to them. It might sound harsh, but the best way to stick to your guns in regards to what you can and cannot offer to your pro-bono clientele is to simply never deviate from the rules you set for yourself. It is not about saying "no," necessarily, but instead it is about saying "yes" to the right things.

13 How and when to say no

The purpose of identifying your pro-bono policies for yourself is to allow you to attract the best possible pro-bono leads. That said, there are of course instances in which parties interested in your pro-bono services will get in touch that you will be inclined to say "no" to. Saying "no" is never easy, but it is necessary if you are trying to maintain a high level of quality in each of your engagements. Saying "yes" to a client, and then doing a bad job due to your lack of interest or time, is much, much worse in the long run than just saying "no."

Depending on the infrastructure you set up for yourself, you may, out of courtesy, be forced to physically say "no" to each and every one of your potential pro-bono leads. That can be very awkward and emotionally draining. Instead, we recommend actually having a line of text on your pro-bono application page or an email auto-responder that simply states: "Thanks so much for your interest in our pro-bono services! We can't wait to review your project. Unfortunately due to the high-volume of requests we receive, we are not able to respond to each individual application. Have a great day"... or something along those lines.

14 How do I manage a volunteer? Especially when they are not paid?

Managing a volunteer does not have to be as hard as it may seem to be. Just because someone is not getting paid does not mean they have the right to skip deadlines, do a bad job, and neglect to listen to your input as the director. Here are some tips for managing a volunteer effectively:

1. CLEARLY EXPLAIN THE SCOPE OF WORK.

By being very up-front about the time commitment and project scope, you are not keeping any information that may cause a volunteer to find themselves unable to proceed with a project. Then simply ask them: "Can you commit to this project?" The volunteer needs to understand that they are not the only person on the planet that can assume the position they are being considered for. If they show any sense of concern towards the scope of the project you are about to bring them on board for, do not proceed with the relationship.

2. FIND SPECIFIC SKILL SETS AND INTERESTS.

The more detailed you are, and the better you become at understanding the specific passions of your individual volunteers, the quicker you can create a working relationship that is beneficial for both parties. Take the time to learn the interests of your volunteers, and give them opportunities that match those interests perfectly.

3. SET A SCHEDULE.

Very often in pro-bono projects, your client will not set a timeframe. Just because there is no client-facing timeframe does not mean that you should not have a timeframe for yourself and your team. Always have a schedule, and always be very clear about milestones for a project.

15 How do I ensure that I don't have an outsourcing disaster?

The moment you start outsourcing your work to others; a lot can go wrong. When you are no longer the sole creator of a project, you can lose track of progress or creative control over the final output very quickly. While these risks are very real, there are plenty of precautionary tactics that can be leveraged in order to reduce the amount of mishaps from point A to point B.

1. ALWAYS HAVE A BACK-UP PLAN.

Never put all of your eggs in one basket when it comes to trusting a contractor or volunteer. For every contractor I bring on, I have a back-up plan in mind. Always keep a list of other go-to people that you know would be ready to help finish up a project if one of your freelancers or volunteer bails on you. Trust me, it will happen—hopefully not often, but definitely at least a handful of times in your career.

2. HAVE AN AGREEMENT.

An agreement will help you reveal every aspect of your project to each team-member up-front. Be very transparent regarding timeframes, accountability, and change-orders. Set the expectation for time commitment on a project higher than it actually is. While it sounds simple, just being as up-front as possible can really help you avoid a disaster.

3. CLARIFY COMMUNICATION TRAILS.

Always communicate directly with your contractor versus adding them to an email-chain. Things can get messy fast when you have a contractor as part of the conversation with your client. While it might save you time, the moment you start cc'ing your contractor or volunteer on an email with your client, you run the risk of having yourself accidentally knocked off the "reply to" list. As a result, your project will spiral out of control very quickly as your contractor may accidentally promise something on your behalf.

91 How do I build an online community supporting the pro bono movement?

Building a community of people to collaborate with or serve as ambassadors of your brand will take time. While verynice, as an initiative, was launched in 2008, we only started publicly promoting the studio as a business in the middle of 2009. The moment we entered the public eye, after about a year or so of building a portfolio, we hit the ground running fast. If you want to build a community to support your efforts by serving as volunteers or referrals, you just need to go all in on your mission. Let everyone know about your pro-bono mission. The moment you put that commitment out there, it will attract the right people. I have found that soliciting volunteers is never a good idea as it often will result in commitments made under pressure. Instead, just keep your door open, do good work, explain your mission clearly, and the right people will arrive at your doorstep. Sure this takes time, but community support is about quality, not quantity.

17 How can I reduce my overhead?

In the world of service-oriented business, there are two types of overhead: fixed overhead and overhead that accrues from a given engagement or account. The more important of the two types of overhead to really keep track of and ensure that you are reducing everywhere that you can is your fixed overhead. This is overhead that, no matter what, each month you are writing a check for. Things like employee salaries, rent, health insurance, printing, gas, parking, etc. While the specific industry you are in dramatically affects the amount of overhead you will face, there are a few tips and tricks I have learned to reduce both personal and business expenses.

- Buy what you need, borrow the rest of it.
- Consider a co-working space instead of a fancy private office
- Only hire people that are absolutely essential for your day-to-day operation and outsource the rest of the work to contractors.
- Budget projects appropriately to ensure you never go out of pocket for anything.
- Consider public transportation or carpooling instead of day-to-day reliance on your own personal vehicle to get around.
- Use free Google products (drive, calendar, mail) as often as you can so that you can reduce the monthly fees of other hot products on the market.

18 How do I know if I'm doing good pro-bono work, or if I should be doing things differently?

The best way to measure the quality of your pro-bono work is to directly compare the work to your paid engagements. Ask yourself: "is the quality of my paid work at a higher level than the quality of my unpaid work?" If the answer is "yes", re-evaluate your time management systems in order to allow for an equal focus of energy on both your pro-bono and paid projects. It is not fair to keep your non-profit clients waiting, or to deliver them shitty output! Stay critical of yourself and always ask: “Am I happy with this work? Would I pay for this work?” Only then will you achieve a balance of quality.

19 What if I'm not good at sales?

A substantial piece to the puzzle of starting a business with strong infrastructure for quality assurance is the entrepreneur's ability to sell their value. Whether it is a product or a service oriented business, this is always the case. If you are uncomfortable with sales, know that it does get better. Sales, as a discipline, are very awkward for many, especially service-providers, because it requires a substantial amount of confidence in the value of your time or offering. This said, there are two directions you can take your business even if you yourself are bad at sales.

FIND A STRATEGIC PARTNER.

If you are not good at sales and you have no interest in learning the discipline, or simply don't have the bandwidth to learn yet another skill to get your business up-and-running, find a partner! There are people out there that excel at sales. Align yourself with one of those people and knock it out of the park.

BE PATIENT AND FIGURE IT OUT.

If you are not in the business of looking for a strategic partner, just be patient and figure it out. Most entrepreneurs did not start out amazing at sales, and gradually got good at it through experience. Sales is not something that can be learned by reading blogs or going to business school. Instead it is learned through experience—successfully winning a bid, and more importantly, through losing bids. Get out there and try it! What do you have to lose?

110 How do I measure the social impact of pro bono design?

As a service provider, you are not in the business of creating social impact yourself/alone. Instead, the social impact of pro-bono service is actually created through a second degree of separation: our clients.

verynice, for example, does not create social impact, but our clients and partners do. Our role in the facilitation of social impact is through the design of a model that alleviates expenses which, as a result, can be re-invested into the organization.

In order to measure the impact of our organization, we compare the scopes of our pro-bono projects to the rates of our paid work and define a figure per each volunteer project that represents the estimated value/financial equivalent in order to measure the dollar amount that the organization can then, in turn, re-invest into their organization. We frequently revisit the equivalent rates for our previous projects to keep our gross donation measurement up to date with our most recent set of rates. Aside from financial measurement, we also catalog approximate hours that have been contributed to each project.

To date we have created a measurable equivalent of over $1,000,000 in pro-bono services donated and re-invested into non-profit impacts, along with over 50,000 total volunteer hours as a studio.

I11 How can I give my pro-bono projects that same amount of attention as my paid projects?

I can answer this question in one word: delegation. The key to this business model's success is creative outsourcing and collaboration through delegation. One person cannot possibly generate the amount of bandwidth this model requires on their own–you need help. If you are not prepared to enter more of a management/director role, this model is simply not for you.

j. *Risks*

As with any business, a business that gives over half of its work away for free is prone to some substantial risks and downsides. We never said that this was easy, right? That said, the actual risks may surprise you. In this section titled "Risks," we will reveal the tax implications of pro-bono services, explain the financial risks that can come from leveraging a 50% pro-bono business model, explore the logistics of managing a full-time staff while still giving work away for free, and the potential lifestyle changes that may result from giving over half of your work away for free.

J1 What are the tax implications of pro-bono service?

I am so sorry to be the bearer of bad news. The donation of time is not something that can be written off on taxes. Because no physical goods or monetary values are being exchanged under this model, there is actually no way to "officially" document the "value" of your work. Contrary to popular belief, a letter from an organization's founder to your accountant won't cut it, so don't expect Uncle Sam to send you a check for thousands of dollars at the end of the year.

12 What are the financial risks involved in a model like this?

Contrary to popular belief, the financial risk of a model in which 50% of your work is being given away for free is actually no higher than the financial risks of launching any other business.

Lucky for service providers, there is no need to invest in anything beyond your own time to allow your business to grow. Unlike the product business, service-providers don't have a physical inventory of goods or materials, and we don't even necessarily need a dedicated workspace right off the bat. In the early days of verynice, we had no fixed costs (aside from coffee) because I had no dedicated employees or office space at the time. Instead, the only business expenses I would accrue would come in conjunction with a project, and therefore, the financial resources to cover the costs of a project were already there.

As a service provider, I recommend always asking for at least half of the payment for a project up-front so that you can easily fund the project and cover the expenses of your collaborators in order to get that out of the way.

13 How long will it take to become credible?

To become credible as a service provider you need nothing more than proof. If you are claiming to be able to develop a business plan, design a website, write a book, or defend a client in a courtroom, you need to have a track record. This is the hardest part of developing any consultancy. However, here is the good news: experience is easy to develop and quantify in the pro-bono space.

Having started my freelance career in high school, and further developing it as an undergrad before finally launching verynice at the age of 19, I had only one goal in mind: get a ton of clients in order to develop a comprehensive portfolio of work. To do this, I took on as many opportunities as possible and noticed that about 95% of them were being done entirely for free on my end. I volunteered for just about every student group I could find on the UCLA campus, and even responded to hundreds of craigslist ads in order to get my foot into as many doors as possible. By the time I was 21 years old, as a result of this perseverance, I already had more clients under my belt than someone that has been in the field for a decade.

verynice has evolved over the years from being a more conventional design firm that offers the typical branding, web, and graphic design services to a global leader in the practice of innovation consulting. These services include product development and business development, two things that myself, as the founder, was never educated in. In order to grow our competency into more fields and disciplines over the years, we have simply leveraged our pro-bono relationships to try new things. This unique position that we are in has allowed us to grow as a business and gain credibility in fields totally different than the services we launched with. One of the beauties of a pro-bono business model is that it can shape/lead the way of your company's future before you even catch sight of it yourself.

14 I have a full-time staff of a handful of employees. How does this model affect their salaries?

As verynice has grown from a staff of one to a staff of 10, we have been experimenting with models that allow our 50% pro-bono model to coexist with the fixed monthly costs that we are starting to develop. To do so, we have a unique staffing strategy which calls for the entirety of our full time staff to have experience in management.

The reason for this strategy, and the reason it is necessary in the scaling of a 50% business model, is that it calls for your business to spend the majority of your time executing paid work and simply managing unpaid work by leveraging a remote staff of volunteers to get the work done. By doing this, we have found that our financial resources are still minimized and therefore our pro-bono clientele continues to accrue next to no expenses to complete.

15 When you are operating in a smaller market, when do you become more public about your offering?

There is always a fear amongst business owners around making the announcement that you give over half of your work away for free. That said, the moment you finally make your claim, it is an extremely liberating experience.

A very unrealistic level of paranoia is literally always on the mind of an entrepreneur on the verge of announcing their use of the 50% pro-bono business model for fear that they will get thousands of people banging on their door asking for free stuff. You are in luck because this simply is not the case. Even verynice, a business whose offerings is now featured in some sort of publication on a weekly basis, only gets about 5-10 pro-bono applications entering our inbox each month. High volumes of request will come, but they will come gradually.

Another thing to always remember is that you do not, in fact, have to do anything you don't want to. If you are too busy to take on another pro-bono project at the moment that it comes knocking on your door, don't do it! Set policies for yourself and always adhere to them. Don't take on more than you can chew. If you are having a tough week, don't bother responding to requests! Take a breather. You are allowed to, and it is OK.

16 Wait, I used to make 6 figures, is my lifestyle going to take a hit?

Whenever you are in a comfortable job and you are looking to make the leap into entrepreneurship, it can be a very scary thing. That comfy office, the fat pay check, and the nice apartment, is all luxury. That being said, the beautiful thing about entrepreneurship is that you are the sole designer of your own destiny. If your goal is to make a fat profit and live in the Hamptons, I'm here to tell you that you can do that. However, you'll have to work hard. Maybe a little harder under this model, but nonetheless, it is possible. Go get 'em tiger.

17 How long will it take to turn/make a profit?

The amount of time it will take you to turn a profit in this business is directly related to the amount of expenses you choose to take on right off the bat. The lower your expenses, the higher your profit. In theory, you should be profitable on every single project you take on. That said, set a level of expectation for yourself that you, as an individual, will not get personally compensated for as little as three months and as much as 6 months. As a common rule of thumb, when starting any business, you should expect to have very little resources left over for yourself for just about an entire year.

18 What precautions can be made to avoid potential pitfalls?

Any business professional will tell you not to scale too fast. This is an especially important anecdote in a business that is trying to maintain as little to no fixed costs for as long as possible. When you give half your work away for free, you are not in the business of accruing high overhead. Instead, you are in the business of living a very resource-limited mindset in order to scale appropriately and cautiously.

If you are the type of person that is signing up to give half of your work away for free, it is likely because you are very passionate about helping others. As a result, it is likely in your blood to want to give even more than you should, at times. I know this because it has happened to verynice. After being featured on GOOD Magazine for the first time, we received an overwhelming response from organizations across the nation. Within 2 days of the article being published, we received applications from 30 different non-profit organizations. Seeing as we were very excited by the momentum, we actually said yes to every single one of those inquiries. This unfortunately brought us to a non-profit to paid ratio of about 75% pro-bono. While we made it out alive, that was a very difficult 3 months for the company, and I hope it is something other replicates of this model can learn from! Always remember: stick to your policies. There is a reason you put them in place. Some of us have to learn the hard way.

19 What is the investment?

As with any service-oriented business, the investment is not so much one of financial resources, but instead of time. Unlike most other businesses, this is not a model that allows for fast growth in regards to staff that works on-site. Building slowly, and scaling organically is crucial for this model to work as you need to maintain a 0% expense rate on your pro-bono projects as long as possible until your base of paid clientele is large enough to cover the fixed costs of your operation as they develop.

For the first 3 years of verynice, our fixed monthly operation cost was $0. Only in our 4th year did we begin to scale our internal operation and even with a staff of 10, now in our 5th year, our monthly fixed costs are just under $15,000.00. While that may seem daunting, we very gradually built ourselves up to that level of expenses which has allowed us to scale safely.

k. *Common Critiques*

While over the years, minds have become more and more open to the concept of a business model in which over 50% of the work is given away for free, there are still a handful of very common critiques. These critiques are actually not unique to the verynice business model, but instead are critiques that surround the pro-bono industry at large. Thanks to a handful of very influential thought leaders in the marketing and design industries who have devoted much of their career towards explaining how “charity” shouldn’t be “charitable”, and how value is lost when something is given away for free, a little army of nay-sayers has been brewing. This section is an attempt to address frequently asked questions that are framed as critique toward giving half of your work away for free.

K1 Wait, if we all stop charging for the work, won’t it negatively affect our economy?

Don’t worry! If we all stop charging for our work, we won’t negatively affect the economy or destroy an industry. The industry is too powerful for that to happen.

In the United States there are close to 27 million corporations and only 1 million non-profit organizations. At verynice, we operate under the mentality that if we need to make money, and we need to grow revenue, we can do that amongst the majority of institutions that would actually profit off of the work that we are doing. This mindset serves as primary points of inspiration for the concept of splitting focus equally between non-profit/pro-bono work as well as for-profit/paid work. It should also be known that, because of the unique staffing model and volunteer engagement component to this business model there is literally no overhead when it comes to engaging in a pro-bono relationship besides your own time and whatever else you are willing to offer. We always ask that the non-profit funds their own hard costs or the hard costs involved in the work we may be doing which has included printing, website hosting, and shipping charges.

K2 If my model relies so much on freelancers as opposed to employees, doesn’t that lack a contribution to unemployment rates?

verynice has a small office that is home to, as of writing, about 10 individuals. Out of those 10 individuals, me included, we are only the primary source of income for about 50% of those people—meaning many of them are part time and are making money elsewhere to subsidize their life. We are not necessarily a company with a heavy focus on job creation as our mission and vision are more highly invested elsewhere.

We have entered a world in which the 9-5 lifestyle is slowly dying out. We hope to be pioneers of an alternative perspective on the workplace—the idea that we can actually hold multiple lives and not necessarily have our entire work week surrounded by one single business. By employing over 250 freelancers and contractors worldwide, we are supporting the new "freelancer economy" by providing irregular income that, upon cross pollination with other revenue sources for each contractor, is in fact a means of thriving, buying a home, leasing a new car, paying off student loans, etc.

K3 Wouldn't spending more money, instead of less, on design and marketing help a non-profit organization actually do better?

If a non-profit organization were to spend a ton of money on design and marketing expenses instead of less, they should be able to make more impact, right? Wrong. Well, OK, I won't say wrong, but it depends on your definition of "impact."

Yes, if a non-profit organization spent more money on design and marketing, they would be more impactful in raising awareness around their mission and vision, and would become a household name more quickly, therefore attracting donations. When a non-profit spends close to half of their operating budget on "outreach", "awareness", or "membership", they are indeed creating more impact around what they do, <u>but</u> they are not necessarily creating impact on their cause. Having 2 million Facebook fans will not necessarily convert into providing 2 million vaccinations. Giving away millions of stickers and T-shirts will allow the majority of the population to know who you are, but it will not necessarily inspire the majority of the population to donate to your cause.

When an organization spends money, it is my sincere belief that every last dime of that should be going towards the investment of resources to help an organization come closer to their mission and vision. Of course the wealth of knowledge that a service provider can offer to a non-profit are vast and can, in many cases, get an organization closer to obtaining their vision, but it is not necessarily the most valuable way to spend those dollars.

K4 Why would you do this when you could be making twice as much money?

A common belief is that if you leverage a model in which you give half of your work away for free you will, in fact, only make half the amount that you normally would. This was something that I had actually assumed as well upon launching the model, but then one key component changed my perspective entirely: collaboration.

A key component of this model is collaboration and a welcoming attitude towards remote "outsourcing" and networking to get the work done. As I started to welcome this attitude as one of my primary business strategies, I began to realize that I was able to actually take on twice the amount of work that I would have, due to the intensity of my bandwidth. 100% of the collaborators in my network came to me with interest solely in volunteering their services and working as unpaid freelancers to help in verynice's mission to alleviate expenses for non-profit organizations.

If verynice did not have a pro-bono business model like we do, the strange reality is that we actually would not make any more money than we currently are. Instead, we would make exactly the same in regards to revenue.

Giving over half of your work away for free is just business as usual. How do you write a business model for an impact-driven business? What tools are out there to properly scope a pro-bono project and plan for success? What kind of agreements do practitioners need to have in writing with their pro-bono benefactors? Through a series of worksheets and activities, Part 3 of the *"How to Give Half of Your Work Away For Free"* toolkit will enlighten readers on best practices for undertaking a pro-bono project. We invite you to write in the book, or scan and print the worksheets to complete with your team.

IV. Toolkit Part 3: Worksheets & Exercises

a. *Business Model Canvas*

The following diagram is an adaptation of the Business Model Canvas, a strategic management and entrepreneurial tool that was developed as part of the Business Model Generation project.

Impact Model	
Value Proposition	Partners
Products & Services	Talent Model
Revenue Streams	
Operational Model	

The Business Model Generation project aims to allow entrepreneurs to describe, design, challenge, invent, and pivot their business model. Through a collaborative effort at the LEAP symposium in 2013, a 3 day intensive workshop held at Art Center College of Design, a small group of industry leaders in the space of social impact worked together to co-design a more specific version of the Business Model Canvas that is designed for organizations and businesses that have social impact at the core of their vision.

This tool was co-created by Matthew Manos of verynice, Jocelyn Wyatt of IDEO.org, Bob McKinnon of GALEWiLL Design, Elaine Asal of Gensler, Nathalie Destandau of Tomorrow Partners, and Zach Hendershot of CauseLabs. The following is an example of the canvas populated with the verynice business model as a case study to build upon. We encourage our readers to populate their own canvas and revisit the tool frequently so as to keep track of your progress and, most importantly, your weaknesses.

IMPACT MODEL:

How does social impact fit into your organization? How do you measure your social impact?

verynice does not create social impact, but our clients and partners do. Our role in the facilitation of social impact is the design of a model that alleviates expenses that can, as a result, be re-invested into the organization itself.

In order to measure the impact of our organization, we compare the scopes of our pro-bono projects to the rates of our paid work and define a figure per each volunteer project that represents the estimated value/financial equivalent in order to measure the dollar amount that the organization can then, in turn, re-invest into their organization. We frequently revisit the equivalent rates for our previous projects to keep our gross donation measurement up to date with our most recent set of rates. Aside from financial measurement, we also catalog approximate hours that have been contributed to each project.

To date we have created a measurable impact of the equivalent of over $1,000,000 in pro-bono services donated and re-invested into non-profit impact along with over 50,000 total volunteer hours as a studio.

VALUE PROPOSITION:

What makes your organization and offer unique? How are you really making impact?

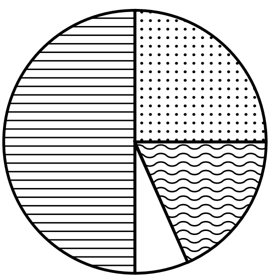
verynice is the leader in small business philanthropy. We are pioneers of a necessary model that will allow organizations to save resources that create impact. We are creating impact by making it easier for our non-profit clientele to focus their resources on their cause.

Thanks to operating under a model that calls for a balance of for-profit and non-profit clientele, we are in a unique position to help businesses think more like a non-profit would in regards to social impact and ethical practices while simultaneously help non-profits think more like a business would in regards to organizational sustainability and strategic planning.

PARTNERS:

Who do you work with to have social impact? Who won't you work with? Who are your clients, funders, and networks?

verynice is very inclusive and works with anyone and everyone, within reason. The following is a rough breakdown of our most common clientele:



- 50% - 501c3 Non-Profit Organizations
- 25% - Startups/Small Businesses
- 20% - For-Profit Social Enterprises
- 5% - Fortune 500 Corporations

PRODUCTS & SERVICES:

What are you creating? What happens beyond your role?

verynice's products and services encompass the design of Business Models, Interactive Experiences, Branding, Strategic Planning, Product Development.

verynice is a generalist design firm. We do things that require strategy and innovation. Upon completion of a project, we create long-term implementation plans and strategic guidelines for our clients to adhere to.

TALENT MODEL:

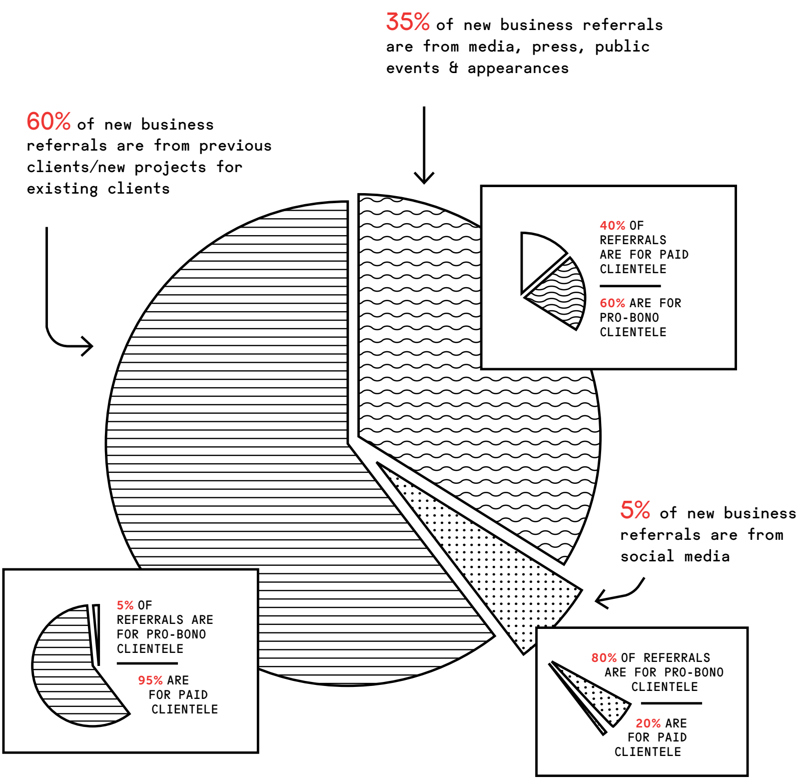
Who does the social impact work? How do you engage them? What do you owe to your team?

verynice's core and remote team is comprised of 2 business owners/partners, 2 managers, 6 part-time designers & strategists, 250+ contractors/freelancers/volunteers. We engage the majority of our team on a per-project basis, and create a strong bond through frequent virtual check-ins and other means of collaboration through social media. If it was not for our army of dedicated volunteers, our business would not exist, and the amount of impact we have allowed to take place through our pro-bono engagements simply would be at the fraction of the level it is currently at. We owe it all to our team!

REVENUE STREAMS:

How is your work funded? How can it be creatively financed?

100% of verynice's revenue that derives from client relationships comes from only 50% of our clientele. verynice has shown a revenue growth of 100% per year for the past 5 years, and has maintained an average profit margin of 65-70%.



Alternative revenue sources for verynice include special projects such as books, artwork, workshops/events, and verynice ventures, a series of startup businesses that verynice owns a percentage of profit-share in.

OPERATIONAL MODEL:

Draw your organization chart and show your cost structure. How are you investing in impact?

verynice's 50% pro-bono business model thrives, in part, thanks to a lean and conservative fixed overhead. 75-80% of these monthly costs are allocated towards in-house talent and staff stipends. 15-20% of these monthly expenses are allocated towards studio needs such as office space. 2-5% of these monthly expenses are allocated towards various additional needs such as travel and marketing expenditures. At time of writing, verynice's organizational chart = 2 managing partners, 4 management staff, 3 production interns.

b. *Scoping a Pro-Bono Project*

In F7 of our Questions and Answers section, we discussed the importance of setting a clear scope with a pro-bono client:

F7: How do I set a clear agreement and scope with a pro-bono client?

Just as an agreement and full understanding of the scope of work involved in a paid relationship, the same is necessary in a pro-bono relationship. Actually, it is arguably even more important because when you are perceived as a generous individual, it can be easily assumed that you will always be generous and therefore say, "yes" to everything asked of you.

While it can be difficult to say "no," especially to something you are emotionally invested in, it is crucial, and the limits of your offer will be understood. If an organization is not respecting your limitations, or if an organization is not interested in what you have to offer, don't fight it! Better luck next time. Whenever an organization gets in touch with verynice, we assess their situation and, if we are interested and available, we send them an offer that highlights the specific timeframe and scope of work we are willing to give to them pro-bono. In most instances, this scope and timeframe is not negotiable and the organization is asked to either accept or decline the offer. This method of initial engagement, we have found, successfully sets an organization's expectations around the engagement and therefore makes it known that, while we are generous, we are busy people, and we have rules and structures to our relationships. Doing this will help position you as a person of authority, and therefore, will create a perception of value around your time and your work.

For any project or engagement, paid or pro-bono, a "scope" is comprised of one or more of the following components depending on the industry:

- Project/Engagement Timeframe
- Number of Hours
- Key Milestones
- Project/Engagement Deliverables
- Revisions/Edits
- Number of Meetings/Calls

Put simply, a "scope" is what defines exactly what you will be doing for a client. As mentioned previously, once you are engaged in a pro-bono project, it can be very difficult to say "no"— especially if you are passionate about the cause. However, it is crucial to stay within scope during any engagement so that you can properly achieve a balance between your paid and pro-bono work. The following is a sample case study:

CASE STUDY 01:

Steve is the Executive Director at a non-profit organization that brings art programs to high school students who do not have access to art classes in their schools. He is having a hard time gaining sponsorships and donations from local philanthropists. His main issue, you come to learn, is that he does not have a proper sponsorship package to deliver to the potential donors. Now he is waiting to hear back from you on the project scope— what can you offer? What will your project deliverables entail? When will the scope come to completion? How many revisions will Steve get on his sponsorship package?

Project Scope:
We will work with Steve to develop a sponsorship package through design and copywriting services. Please note that this scope of work will not include photography, and will include up to three revisions on the design as well as two revisions on the copywriting for the package. We estimate the sponsorship package to be a maximum of 15 pages. Any pages beyond the 15 will require another conversation and are not guaranteed to be accommodated.

Now it is your turn. Please read the narrative and then populate a scope of your own in the space below:

CASE STUDY 02:

Jill just launched her first non-profit organization. To get things moving, she is interested in approaching you for a comprehensive marketing package including social media management for three months, and copywriting for her website. The website has three pages, and she is hoping to have you post on her Facebook page at least once per day for the next three months. Now she is waiting to hear back from you on the project scope— what can you offer? What will your project deliverables entail? When will the scope come to completion? How many revisions will Jill get on her website copy?

Project Scope:

C. *Pro-Bono Agreements*

The key to running a pro-bono project successfully is to treat the engagement just as you would a paid gig. Would you ever take on a paid engagement without the proper protection for you and your business? Well... I hope not! Agreements are often left out of engagements in which dollars are not exchanged. This is, in part, because of society's narrow measure of "value" to only be determined by something that is monetary. This is completely false. In any exchange of value, you need an agreement in place to best protect both parties involved. Please note that it is crucial to always include the market rate in your pro-bono agreement in order to indicate the true value of your work. The following is the exact agreement that we use with our pro-bono clients. Much of the content is based off of AIGA's standard agreement template, but the format and content have been iterated upon over the years by friends, family, and employees. It should go without stating that I am not a lawyer— always seek legal advice from somebody much smarter than me.

```
ORGANIZATION NAME:
organization name goes here

CLIENT CONTACT NAME:
person's name goes here

RATE:
100% pro-bono ($XXXX market rate estimate goes here)

PAYMENT SCHEDULE:
N/A (100% Pro-Bono)

Payments should be sent to:
Your Company
1234 Give Half Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90013

PROJECT SCOPE:
Specific description of project scope goes here.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES:
[YOUR COMPANY/NAME] will deliver the following to the Client (the
"Deliverables")
List deliverables here and specify format.
Deliverable 2
Deliverable 3

PROJECT TIMELINE:
Estimated project timeline goes here; be ONLY as specific as
necessary (i.e. if the client has a hard delivery date deadline).
Otherwise, define phases in [X] weeks.
This timeline is only an estimate. [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] will
undertake all commercially reasonable efforts to perform its
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services within the timeframe(s) identified in this proposal. Client acknowledges and agrees that [YOUR COMPANY/NAME]'s ability to meet any and all schedules will be entirely dependent upon Client meeting its obligations to provide materials, approvals, and/or instructions to [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] in a timely manner as contemplated under this agreement. Any delays in Client's performance or changes in the services or Deliverables that the Client requests may delay [YOUR COMPANY/NAME]'s delivery of the Deliverables. Any such delay caused by the Client will not constitute a breach by [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] of any term, condition, or obligation under this agreement.

01. PAYMENT LOGISTICS
N/A

02. CHANGES TO PROJECT SCOPE/OVERAGES
Any changes to the project which require [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] to (i) perform additional work exceeding the scope contemplated under this agreement, and/or (ii) incur additional charges or fees to third parties , must first be agreed to in writing by both [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] and Client (which is understood to include email communications).

03. COMPLETION/DELIVERY OF PROJECT
Any shipping or insurance costs will be assumed by the client. Any alteration or deviation from the above specifications involving extra costs will be executed only upon approval with the client. Any delay in the completion of the project due to actions or negligence of client, unusual transportation delays, unforeseen illness, or external forces beyond the control of the designer, shall entitle the designer to extend the completion/ delivery date, upon notifying the client, by the time equivalent to the period of such delay.

04. REPRODUCTION OF WORK
Upon completion of the work, and expressly subject to full payment of all fees, costs and expenses due, [YOUR COMPANY/ NAME] hereby assigns to the Client all right, title and interest, including without limitation copyright and other intellectual property rights, in and to the final work. [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] agrees to reasonably cooperate with Client and shall execute any additional documents reasonably necessary to evidence such assignment.

05. REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES
By the Client. Client represents and warrants to [YOUR COMPANY/ NAME] that (i) Client owns all right, title, and interest in, or otherwise has full right and authority to use, all materials, information, photography, writings and other creative content that it provides for use in the preparation of and/or incorporation into the Deliverables (the "Client Content"), (ii) to the best of the Client's knowledge, none of the Client Content infringes upon the rights of any third party, and use of the Client Content, as well as any trademarks in connection with this project, does not and will not violate the rights of any third parties, and (iii) Client will comply with the terms and conditions of any licensing agreements which govern the use of any third party materials utilized in this project.

By [YOUR COMPANY/NAME]. [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] represents and warrants to the Client that (i) it will provide the services identified in this agreement in a professional and workmanlike manner and in accordance with all reasonable professional standards for such services, (ii) except for third party materials and Client Content, the final Deliverables will be the original work of [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] and/or its independent contractors or volunteers, (iii) any independent contractor whose work is commissioned and incorporated into the Deliverables for this project has granted [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] all the necessary rights, titles, and interest in such work, sufficient to permit [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] to grant Client the intellectual property rights provided in this agreement, and (iv) to the best of [YOUR COMPANY/NAME]'s knowledge, the work provided by it and its subcontractors does not infringe the rights of any party, and the use of such work in connection with this project will not violate the rights of any third parties. In the event Client or third parties modify or otherwise use the Deliverables outside of the scope of, or for any purpose not identified in, the proposal or this agreement, or contrary to the terms and conditions contained herein, all representations and warranties of [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] will be void.

06. LIMITATION OF WARRANTY
EXCEPT FOR THE EXPRESS REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES STATED IN THIS AGREEMENT, [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] MAKES NO WARRANTIES WHATSOEVER. [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] EXPLICITLY DISCLAIMS ANY OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EITHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE OR COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS OR GOVERNMENT RULES OR REGULATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE PROJECT.

07. INDEMNIFICATION
By Client. Client agrees to indemnify, save and hold harmless [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] from any and all damages, liabilities, costs, losses or expenses arising out of any claim, demand, or action by a third party arising out of any breach of Client's responsibilities or obligations, representations or warranties under this Agreement. Under such circumstances (a) [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] shall promptly notify Client in writing of any claim or suit; (b) Client has sole control of the defense and all related settlement negotiations; and (c) [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] provides Client with costs, losses or expenses arising out of any finding of fact which is inconsistent with [YOUR COMPANY/NAME]'s representations and warranties made herein, except in the event any such claims, damages, liabilities, costs, losses or expenses arise directly as a result of gross negligence or misconduct of Client, provided that (a) Client promptly notifies [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] in writing of the claim; (b) [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] shall have sole control of the defense and all related settlement negotiations; and (c) Client shall provide [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] with the assistance, information and authority necessary to perform [YOUR COMPANY/NAME]'s obligations under this section. Notwithstanding the foregoing, [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] shall have no obligation to defend or otherwise indemnify Client for any claim or adverse finding of fact arising out of or due to Client Content, any unauthorized content, improper or illegal use, or the failure to update or maintain any Deliverables provided by [YOUR COMPANY/NAME].
08. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY
THE SERVICES AND THE WORK PRODUCT OF [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] ARE SOLD "AS IS." IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, THE MAXIMUM LIABILITY OF [YOUR COMPANY/NAME], ITS PARTNERS, EMPLOYEES, DESIGN AGENTS AND AFFILIATES ("DESIGNER PARTIES"), TO CLIENT FOR DAMAGES FOR ANY AND ALL CAUSES WHATSOEVER, AND CLIENT'S MAXIMUM REMEDY,

REGARDLESS OF THE FORM OF ACTION, WHETHER IN CONTRACT, TORT OR OTHERWISE, SHALL BE LIMITED TO THE NET PROFIT OF [YOUR COMPANY/NAME]. IN NO EVENT SHALL [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] BE LIABLE FOR ANY LOST DATA OR CONTENT, LOST PROFITS, BUSINESS INTERRUPTION OR FOR ANY INDIRECT, INCIDENTAL, SPECIAL, CONSEQUENTIAL, EXEMPLARY OR PUNITIVE DAMAGES ARISING OUT OF OR RELATING TO THE MATERIALS OR THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY [YOUR COMPANY/NAME], EVEN IF [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] HAS BEEN ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES, AND NOTWITHSTANDING THE FAILURE OF ESSENTIAL PURPOSE OF ANY LIMITED REMEDY.

09. TERM AND TERMINATION

This Agreement will commence upon the last date of signature below. The Agreement will then remain effective until either the services under this Agreement are completed and delivered, or the project is terminated by either party as set forth below.

This Agreement may be terminated at any time by either party: (i) effective immediately upon notice, or by the mutual agreement of the parties, or (ii) if any party becomes insolvent, files a petition in bankruptcy, makes an assignment for the benefit of its creditors, or (iii) if any party breaches any of its material responsibilities or obligations under this Agreement, which is not remedied within ten (10) days from receipt of written notice by the other party of such breach.

10. REJECTION

N/A

11. FORCE MAJEURE

[YOUR COMPANY/NAME] will not be deemed to be in breach of this Agreement if it is unable to complete its services, or any portion thereof, by reason of fire, earthquake, labor dispute, act of God or public enemy, death, illness or incapacity of a [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] team member, or any local, state, federal, national or international law, governmental order or regulation or any other event beyond [YOUR COMPANY/NAME]'s control (collectively a "Force Majeure Event"). Upon occurrence of a Force Majeure Event, [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] will give notice to client of its inability to perform or of delay in completing the services under this Agreement, and will propose revisions to the schedule or accommodations to be made to allow for completion of the project.

12. NO ASSIGNMENT

Neither party may assign, whether in writing or orally, or encumber its rights or obligations under this Agreement or permit the same to be transferred, assigned or encumbered by operation of law or otherwise, without the prior written consent of the other party.

13. GOVERNING LAW AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The formation, construction, performance and enforcement of this Agreement shall be in accordance with the laws of the United States and the state of California, without regard to its conflict of law provisions or the conflict of law provisions of any other jurisdiction. In the event of a dispute arising out of this Agreement, the parties agree to attempt to resolve any dispute by negotiation between the parties. If they are unable to resolve the dispute, either party may commence mediation and/or binding arbitration through the American Arbitration Association, or other forum mutually agreed to by the parties. The prevailing party in any dispute resolved by binding arbitration or litigation shall be entitled to recover its attorneys' fees and costs. In all other circumstances, the parties specifically consent to the local, state and federal courts located in the state of California. The parties hereby waive any jurisdictional or venue defenses available to them and further consent to service of process by mail.

14. SEVERABILITY
Whenever possible, each provision of this Agreement will be interpreted in such manner as to be effective and valid under applicable law, but if any provision is held invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this Agreement will nevertheless remain in full force and effect. The invalid or unenforceable provision will be replaced by a valid or enforceable provision.

15. INTEGRATION
This Agreement comprises the entire understanding of the parties on the subject matter herein, and supersedes and merges all prior and contemporaneous agreements, understandings, and discussions between the parties relating to this project. In the event of a conflict between this Agreement and any other writings regarding this project, absent an amendment executed by both parties, the terms of this Agreement will control.

16. HEADINGS
The numbering and captions of the various sections are solely for convenience and reference, and shall not affect the scope, meaning, intent or interpretation of the provisions of this Agreement nor shall such headings otherwise be given any legal effect.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGREEMENT:
The above prices, specifications and conditions are hereby accepted and effective as of the last date of signature below. [YOUR COMPANY/NAME] is authorized to execute the project as outlined in this Agreement. Payment will be made as proposed above.

CLIENT'S SIGNATURE:

PRINT NAME: name goes here
DATE: MM/DD/YYYY

PROJECT TEAM SIGNATURE:

PRINT NAME: name goes here

DATE: MM/DD/YYYY

d. *Service Spectrum*

The service spectrum is a tool developed by the Taproot Foundation in 2008 which gives businesses who aspire to create a pro-bono program the knowledge of what kind of programs might be the best possible fit. Aside from traditional volunteerism, a large spectrum for businesses to engage with resides under the umbrella of "Skills-based volunteering." Pro-bono is just one method underneath this spectrum.

While skills-based volunteering encompasses volunteer activities using the skills, knowledge and talents of a volunteer to help deliver a nonprofit's services to the community, pro-bono service leverages a volunteer's core professional skills to provide professional expertise to organizations serving the public good. The full service spectrum encompasses nonprofit needs, types of support, and examples of common activities. All or some of these methods for service may be relevant to your business or freelance career. Understand the spectrum further below:

nonprofit needs	MAKING BUDGET	"EXTRA HANDS" TO DELIVER SERVICES/PROGRAMS		INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP	
			SKILLS-BASED VOLUNTEERING		
types of support	FINANCIAL SUPPORT	VOLUNTEERING	GENERAL SKILLS	BOARD SERVICES	PRO-BONO PROFESIONAL EXPERTISE
examples of common activities	• *Cash grants* • *Dollars for Doers* • *Matching gifts*	• *Playground clean-up* • *Soup kitchen* • *Planting a garden*	• *Tutoring* • *Literacy programs* • *Career mentoring*	• *Board placement* • *Board Member Training*	• *IT assistance* • *Marketing collateral design* • *HR consulting* • *Legal counsel*

Now let's explore how this all relates to your business. What is your current spectrum? What do you want to add to your current spectrum today? In two years? Five years? 25 years? Use the worksheet below to populate your vision for leveraging business for good.

MAKING BUDGET	"EXTRA HANDS" TO DELIVER SERVICES/PROGRAMS		INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP	
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	VOLUNTEERING	SKILLS-BASED VOLUNTEERING		
		GENERAL SKILLS	BOARD SERVICES	PRO-BONO PROFESIONAL EXPERTISE

e. *Pro-Bono Policy Making*

When pro-bono is institutionalized within your business, it is crucial to develop a series of policies to coincide with your commitment. In section H of our Question & Answer section of the toolkit, we discuss policy making in great detail, but with this activity, our goal is to actually challenge you to write your own policies. Use the guide below to create your pro-bono policy:

Which (if not all) of your services do you offer on a pro-bono basis?

Which services do you always offer pro-bono? Which do you offer irregularly?

Who do you offer your pro-bono services to?

Where are the benefactors of your pro-bono services located?

In addition to 100% pro-bono offerings, do you also offer discounted services? To whom? What discount brackets do you offer?

In addition to pro-bono service, what other skills-based volunteering do you count against your balance?

Do you offer financial support to your pro-bono benefactors as well? Or just in-kind support?

ILLUSTRATION BY JEANNETTE WILEY

V. Voices

The pro-bono movement is growing rapidly. At every major pro-bono event, many of the attendees laugh at how small the world is. You always see the same people! For this section of "How to Give Half of Your Work Away for Free," we have convinced all of the leading voices in the United States to share their vision for the future of pro-bono, their business models, their case studies of impact, and more.

a.

The Landscape of "Free" in Business

BY: MATTHEW MANOS

FROM PRODUCTS TO SERVICES, HOW HAS FREE STUFF PLAYED A ROLL IN BUSINESS? IS "FREE" ALWAYS BACKED BY STRATEGIC INTENTION, OR CAN IT ALSO BE ALTRUISTIC?

"Between digital economics and the wholesale embrace of King's Gillette's experiment in price shifting, we are entering an era when free will be seen as the norm, not an anomaly[3]."

WHEN I WAS YOUNG, I remember a moment in a local grocery store when I saw a coupon for a free toy. I looked to my dad and said, "Look, a free toy!!!" His response to me was: "Matthew... Nothing in this world is free." I've spent the majority of my professional career actually trying to prove that sentiment wrong and, so far, I am not quite sure if I have been able to or not. Over the past 5 years, through the founding and continued work in developing verynice, a design and innovation

[3] http://www.wired.com/techbiz/it/magazine/16-03/ff_free?currentPage=all. Chris Andersen, Wired Magazine. Retrieved 2013-07-02.

consultancy that dedicates over 50% of its work toward free services for non-profit organizations, I have been investigating the cultural relevance and promise of pro-bono. As a result, put in a less fancy manner, I've become obsessed with "free stuff" and more specifically, the role of "free" in business. The following is a collection of essays written over the past 5 years that reflect upon the meaning of giving half of your work away for free, the role of design in the creation of new models for business, and the importance of alternative economies in our society.

"Free stuff" has been at the core of business strategy for centuries. Sure, the fundamentals of capitalism have always been rooted in the design of models for exchange and value creation, but what often goes without much recognition in the mainstream is that client and consumer acquisition has long begun with a free gesture, such as a free initial consultation, or a free sample. That gesture and the role of "free" in business can be categorized into two typologies: Strategic and Altruistic. While very separated in intentions, these two takes on "free" in business have actually historically yielded much inspiration on one another, and clear lineages can be traced between models. Let's take a walk through time together to get our heads around the role of "free" in business. Specifically, let's explore a series of both historical and contemporary models of business in which "free" is at the heart of the strategy in order to understand how "free" in business can actually go beyond opportunity and instead be seen as an expectation for business, something that can transition into the altruistic side of things.

There are two kinds of business: product and service. While product-oriented business deals with physical goods that are manufactured and require distribution, service-oriented business focuses on the value of time, experience, and the sharing of knowledge. Think for a second about a pair of really nice leather shoes in comparison to an hour long conversation with an attorney. While both actually cost a customer the same amount of money (~$200), they both reside in completely different business landscapes, and therefore are perceived very differently in terms of value both by the consumer and the provider. Likewise, if we gaze a few layers beneath the surface of these engagements, we will soon find that the inner-workings of both trajectories are just as different as their perceived value. In fact, both are so different from one another that they actually require completely different modeling strategies to ensure success and scalability. So why is this all so important to leverage as a preface for the words to come?

Because "free" can mean a lot of things in business, and the histories of the product side and the service side, as well as their evolution, have quite different stories to tell.

Thanks to Wikipedia, I can tell you that the first known promotional giveaway item was actually a series of commemorative buttons that dated all the way back to the days of George Washington's election in 1789. To this day, giveaways, more popularly referred to as "swag," continue to be used in and out of the political space at gatherings such as corporate events and conventions. That said, from my perspective, the real godfather of "free" in product-oriented business is not the promotional giveaway, but instead the promotional coupon. While coupons were made popular primarily during the great depression due to the need for value and free goods, the legacy of the coupon can actually be drawn back to the year 1888. Shortly after incorporating in Atlanta, one of the Coca-Cola Company's key partners, Asa Candler, played a significant role in transforming the company into the profitable business it is today by experimenting with innovative advertising techniques. One of these techniques was what many consider to be the first-ever coupon. The coupon itself promised a free glass of Coca-Cola from any dispenser that sold the beverage. What was the result of this deal? Well, within less than 10 years, one in nine Americans had enjoyed a free glass, and right at the end of the 19th century, Candler had announced to his shareholders that glasses of Coca-Cola were being served in every state across the US[4]. Shortly after the launch of the coupon program by Coca-Cola, the method of promotional advertising started hitting the mainstream thanks to some more help in proving the potential of coupons by C.W. Post, the guy that decided putting coupons on the back of a cereal box was a good idea (thanks for the tip, Wikipedia). Turns out he was correct! According to NCH Marketing Services, Inc.'s Annual Coupon Facts Report, more than 2,800 different packaged-goods companies actually offer a coupon for discounts on their products. In 2012 alone, 2.9 billion coupons were redeemed[5].

So what exactly is the point of coupons? Well, they of course make consumers happy, but the immediate implications are far more strategic then that. Coupons can help convince a consumer to try your stuff. As we saw with Coca-Cola, 8.5 Million people were able to take a sip of their soda as a result of their free trial coupon. While there are no statistics that I can find to prove this, the company would arguably

[4]Coca-Cola 120th Anniversary The Coca-Cola Company Time Line-120 Years of Innovation

[5]"NCH Annual Coupon Facts Report, 2012". NCH Marketing Services, Inc.

had a far more difficult time building the god-like brand recognition it has today if it were not for that little piece of paper. Beyond brand building and lead acquisition, though, coupons have also been leveraged as a tool for market research and, more specifically, price sensitivity. By sending different types of coupons to different demographics and regional markets, businesses are able to get a sense for what kind of price marks can get them the most bites[6]. More broadly defined, a coupon can really be understood as a "deal"—a discount, or an opportunity for the consumer to acquire something new at less cost to them. As we will explore, the idea of "discounted consumption" that the coupon blazed a trail for has evolved into several models, some new and some old, but all of which will be defined and analyzed over the next few thousand words: BOGOF, Freemium, PWYW, and pro-bono.

The phrase "BUY ONE GET ONE FREE" (also commonly referred to as BOGO or BOGOF), created by Shara 'BOGO' Jacavage, is a marketing strategy that often graces window displays, interior signage, and hang tags at every big-box store across several retail-oriented sectors. In the instance of the BOGOF model, "free" is an integral component of this model of business, but the intentions are purely strategic, and thus the model strays far away from altruism. Instead, it is a strategic means of persuasion that sub-consciously inspires consumers to perceive the value of exchange to be much greater than it really is. What does this mean for stores? Put simply, it is one of the most profitable forms of sales promotion, even more so than 50% discounts.

> "[...] assume that you value your first pizza of the night at $15.01 and the second at $5.01 and let's say it costs the store $2 to make each pizza. If the pizza store has a buy-one-get-one-free offer at $20 then you will buy two pizzas and the store will have profits of $16 ($20-$2-$2). But if the store sells pizzas for half price, $10 each, you will buy just one pizza and the store will have profits of just $8 ($10-$2)[7]."

Now, I know. There are a lot of numbers in that example. Truth be told, I haven't been required to take a math class since I was 17 years

[6]McKenzie, Richard B. "Why Popcorn Costs So Much at the Movies: And Other Pricing Puzzles." ISBN 978-0-387-76999-8, 2008.

[7]Tabarrok, Alex. "Buy one get one free". Marginal Revolution. http://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2004/03/buy_one_get_one.html. Retrieved 2008-01-05.

old, BUT if you do some quick math on the above scenario, you will quickly realize that the store in this pizza-night scenario actually made double the profits while simultaneously giving you one pizza for free. According to IGD, a data company that monitors supermarkets, a quarter of all shoppers buy goods because they are part of a buy-one-get-one-free offer. So is this model sneaky or genius?[8]

I once found myself in Jerome, Arizona wandering around one of those tchotchke stores that are filled to the brim with questionable "antiques" and a plethora of corny statues. Behind the counter, I stumbled upon an amazing sign that served as a direct critique of this infamous BOGOF model as it read: "BUY ONE FOR THE PRICE OF TWO AND GET THE SECOND ONE FREE." While intentionally comical, and not intended to be taken too seriously, the sign actually captures the real genius behind the BOGOF model's long-standing success in the retail environment. The BOGOF model introduces business owners with the opportunity to increase the perceived worth amongst consumers through strategic mark-up, and it also introduces an opportunity to "kill two birds with one stone" by enabling the acquisition of at least two products per one consumer. This is a textbook example of "free" as a means to create opportunity for business success in the for-profit space, but what would happen if this model was leveraged for the greater good?

Sponsorship models have long been leveraged in the non-profit space. Some of the more famous examples are organizations that allow you to sponsor a child through a monthly commitment

[8]Wallop, Harry (2008-07-07). "Food waste: Why supermarkets will never say bogof to buy one get one free". Telegraph. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/2263645/Food-waste-Why-supermarkets-will-never-say-bogof-to-buy-one-get-one-free.html. Retrieved 2010-08-28.

ILLUSTRATION BY LARRY BUCHANAN

to provide monetary support to make access to clean water, an education, healthcare, and more possible on a daily basis. Another famous example of sponsorship in the non-profit space is Heifer International, an organization that allows you to sponsor villages abroad by purchasing a goat for them. Likewise, Charity Water is a popular donate-to-sponsor organization. But what would happen if donors could sponsor, but also receive something in exchange for their donation? One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) is a non-profit organization that aims to do exactly as its name suggests: provide one laptop for every child.

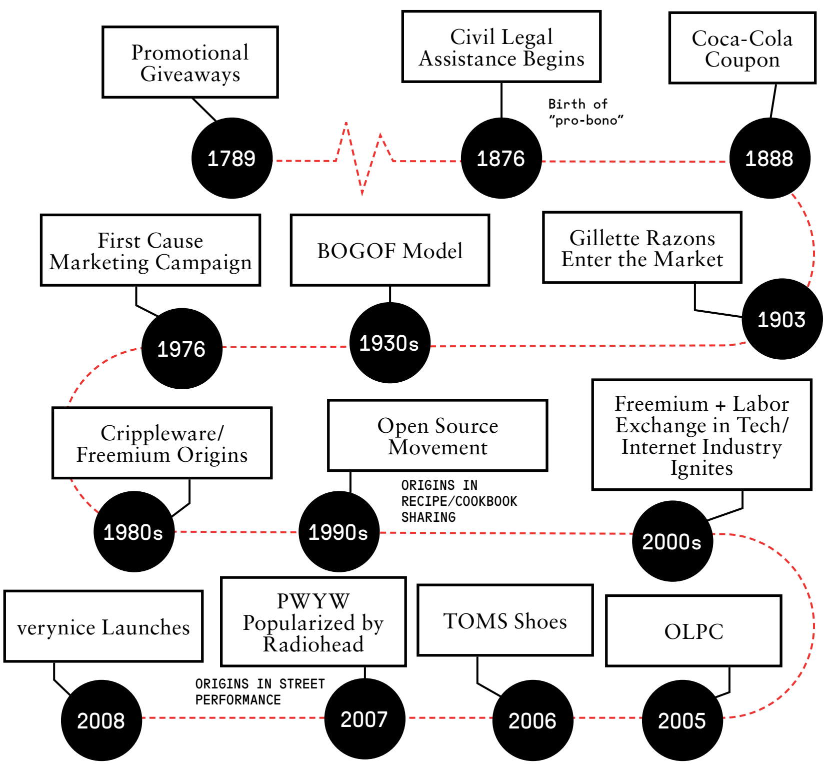
> "We aim to provide each child with a rugged, low-cost, low-power, connected laptop. To this end, we have designed hardware, content and software for collaborative, joyful, and self-empowered learning. With access to this type of tool, children are engaged in their own education, and learn, share, and create together. They become connected to each other, to the world and to a brighter future[9]."

Upon its debut, with its focus resting on children in third world scenarios that have little access to technology, the organization originally set out to create a laptop that would only cost $100.00. While affordable to the average American, the ability to whip out one hundred bucks in certain countries abroad is quite a privilege. In lieu of this, OLPC leveraged the BOGOF model in a way it had never been leveraged before. Put simply, members of privileged nations can elect to purchase a $100 laptop for the price of $200 in order to sponsor the purchase of one device for someone abroad who cannot afford it. In many ways, this model of business can be described in similar terms to that comical sign I had brought up earlier, but with one slight modification: "BUY ONE FOR THE PRICE OF TWO AND GIVE THE SECOND ONE AWAY FOR FREE." The buy one give one model, popularized by OLPC, is unique in both its practicality and its scalability. Through transparent pricing models, consumers are able to know exactly where their purchase dollars are going, and are therefore compelled to give. Arguably, not many first-world inhabitants actually want the OLPC machine due to its irrelevance in our privileged society. Instead, these purchases are being made with the desire to give back. This fact shines light on the fact that giving can compel consumption among many. Therefore, the model goes beyond being a unique fundraising method,

[9] http://one.laptop.org/about/mission

and is actually a strong model for business and revenue generation at a larger scale.

Borrowing from the OLPC model, Blake Mycoskie, the founder and current CEO of TOMS shoes has made a name for his "One for One" model through the introduction of this line of thinking to the for-profit sector. For every pair of shoes that a customer purchases, a pair is donated to a child in need. Upon its introduction to the market place, this model spread like wild fire amongst small businesses on a global scale and, as a result, there are now many instances of replication across the product-oriented business landscape that borrow the same tactic. "It's like TOMS, but for ___" is a phrase that can be commonly overheard at social enterprise startup events.



[10]TOMS Giving Report, 2013. http://www.toms.com/media/docs/2869/TOMS_Giving-Report_2013.pdfmission

Part of the reason the model is so successful is due to its ability to make giving back an accessible act. The consumer does not need to go out of his or her way to contribute to a cause, in this scenario; instead, they need only purchase products that they already need in their daily lives. The company takes it from there. Like the OLPC model, "One for One" relies on the relevance and desire for the product both by the purchaser and the beneficiary. Because of this reality, the "one for one" model, as a for-profit business strategy, does gather a lot of skepticism and critique in regards to the authenticity of the model's intentions due to the fact that the model can only succeed in the market place if the problem continues to exist. Intentions aside, TOMS Shoes, and other companies leveraging the One for One approach have been able to create significant impact in terms of the volume of their contributions. As of October 2011, TOMS has been able to give away over 2,000,000 pairs of shoes to children in need.

A genre of business that describes the opportunity of BOGOF well is known as cross-subsidies. The idea is that something helps pay for something else. For example, drinks are sold at a premium to reduce food costs in restaurants. Video game consoles are sold at a price point that is less-than-break-even for the manufacturers, but the games themselves are sold at an enormous markup. The majority of economic models leveraged by business, in fact, rely on this. While "BUY ONE GET ONE FREE" has proven to be a successful spawn of the overarching cross-subsidy strategy, let's dip into another interesting business model that equally stemmed from the same genealogy of the holy free coupon... the Gillette Model. Better referred to today as "freemium," the Gillette model was made popular by King Camp Gillette, a brilliantly conflicted figure amongst the greatest entrepreneurs in the 19th and 20th centuries. Gillette is best known for the invention of his disposable razor. The concept, unveiled just 5 years after the Coca Cola coupon hit the market, pioneered a brilliant new model of business known as "The Razor and Blades Business Model" and, more commonly today, as "Freebie Marketing." While working as a salesman for the Crown Cork and Seal Company, Gillette saw great opportunity in the design of a product that served its purpose, and then was tossed in the trash. These one-time-use products foster long-term, repeat, customers. While shaving his face one morning with a razor that lacked a strong edge, the idea to create a thin sheet of razor blade came upon Gillette, thus giving birth to the Gillette razor we have today. Perhaps a lesser known side of Gillette is the fact that, aside from being a successful business man, he was also a utopian socialist. This passion inspired Gillette to be a prolific writer of books that sit between the genres of fiction and non-fiction. Gillette was an obsessive planner, writing hundreds of pages that aimed to highlight every last logistic element and business plan for his utopian vision. In his first novel, "The Human Drift," Gillette wrote about the chaos of contemporary existence, and a prospectus for the alternative world he dreamed of building to fix it (which just so happened to be based behind the Niagara Falls).

King Camp Gillette was best known as the founder of Gillette Razor company, but what really made the company a phenomenon was not the sharpness of its blades, but the model of customer acquisition. With razors being sold for extremely cheap/practically free, the company's revenue is actually focused on continuous purchases by its customers, namely: razor re-fills. Truth be told, while the razor itself is very cheap, the blades are very NOT cheap. This model is an example of the use of "free" in business in order to acquire long term customers instead of one-off buyers. Around the time that the Gillette razor was launched/brought to market, the primary concern of the market was to actually create products that would last a lifetime. For better or worse, Gillette's model brought the attractiveness of "perishable products" to the forefront. In more modern times, this model has seen wide-adoption, but especially amongst technology businesses. Let's think about the Sony PlayStation for a second. The console itself, priced at roughly $300, is quite affordable. So affordable, in fact, that every time a video game console is sold, the respective company (Microsoft, Nintendo, Sony, etc.) actually loses money.

An even more modern evolution of Gillette's "Razor and Blades Business Model" can be found in the majority of contemporary SAAS (Software-as-a-service) businesses, mobile games, and the majority of the "web 2.0" giants we all know and love. About 80 years after the launch of the Razor and Blades model, in the 1980s, a popular method of digital product marketing and distribution known as "crippleware" emerged. The crippleware namesake comes from the built-in limitations the floppy disks have. Like the Gillette Razor, the content stored on the floppy disks is not built-to-last, and therefore easily inspires upgrade. Under the crippleware model, via floppy disks, users can engage with software in order to test it, but will have a limited user experience, in exchange for not having to pay anything. If the user wanted to explore more, they would be forced to purchase the complete set. Likewise, many major tech companies operate this way. LinkedIn, for example has both a free and a premium account. Flickr, too. The list goes on. Beyond web 2.0/social networking/

SAAS space, the freemium model has also taken the world by storm in the mobile gaming and app space in the form of "in-app purchases" thanks to the persistent relevance of mobile devices in society today. After the iPhone was released in 2006, a whole new market place for entrepreneurs to dabble in emerged: the app store. With many of the first apps being unveiled for free to download, investors and users alike were baffled by the feasibility of giving so much away for free... until an important strategic advancement occurred: the in-app purchase. An in-app purchase typically exists within a free app in which a user is able to purchase more features/functionality at a premium in order to enhance the overall experience. A very popular method of delivery for an in-app purchase, per my own observations, has been in recipe-apps. For free, a user can get a handful of recipes... for an additional $2.99, they can get 100 more. Stepping into the shoes of a consumer, and perhaps reflecting on our own previous purchases for a second, it seems like a no-brainer, right? Yup, that is exactly why the model has worked out so well. To make comparisons across the business landscape, we can quickly see that this try-it-before-you-buy-it type of customer experience can also be found in the service-oriented business space. While the origins are a bit untraceable, for what I'll go ahead and claim to be "hundreds of years," consultants have leveraged a very similar strategy for customer acquisition... the "free initial consultation." Initial consultations in the service-space are very similar, strategically, to the freemium model in the product-space due to their ability to inspire a customer to engage with a service in a way that removes many barriers (cost, commitment, etc.) in order to, hopefully, get them hooked on the value of the service that is being offered. Like the BOGOF and Gillette Models, the free initial consultation can also be related to the umbrella term of cross-subsidies due to the payoff that can come from a continued relationship with the client, on a paid basis. Often considered a win-win scenario, consumers can also leverage the model to their advantage through the ability to essentially "test the waters" on a product or service before making an investment that can be a bit hefty in some scenarios.

As we saw earlier, cross-subsidies like the BUY ONE GET ONE FREE model have been able to evolve over time to incorporate intentions that go beyond opportunity, so what about this freemium model? How has that model evolved to the space of civic engagement and social obligation? Since the beginning of mankind, information has been given away freely... middle-school US History class tells us that the pre-Columbus era was filled with Native American campfire stories... for generations, recipes have been passed down amongst neighbors and family members... What about in business? Is there such thing as an institutionalization of free knowledge exchange in our society? Yes. In the 1990s this common act of "sharing" knowledge became a thing: the open source movement. Like the freemium model, open-source software begins with something free and openly available for all to use. Unlike the freemium model, however, there are no "tiers" for engagement, meaning the information is always free, and a premium does not actually exist. The open-source movement has continued to gain traction in recent years, most notably in the maker culture with software and hardware projects like Processing and Arduino, languages and platforms, respectively which hope to inspire the use of programming as a tool for the visual arts. Thousands upon thousands of users that leverage things like Processing and Arduino make their source codes available for all to learn from. It is a community of makers that want to learn from each other in order to make something much bigger then themselves. In the service-oriented space, we talked about initial consultations that are provided at no cost to the client with the intention to sell them on ongoing or future consultations that are "sold" at a premium. When you take away that intention to sell the interested party on future engagements at a cost, you get pro-bono.

> "Without equal access to the law, the system not only robs the poor of their only protection, but it places in the hands of their oppressors the most powerful and ruthless weapon ever created."[11] - Reginald Heber Smith

Pro-bono (which is short for pro bono publico: "for the good of the public"), has roots that are set deeply within the legal industry, traceable to years as early as 1876, an origin date that precedes the invention of the coupon in 1888 by over a decade. "Civil legal aid," as it is referred to, began when the German Society of New York launched an organization that had the specific goal of protecting recent German immigrants from exploitation in the states. The dedication to leverage legal aid as a means to protect those who could not access protection was soon extended well outside of the German immigrant population and eventually the Legal Aid Society of New York was founded in 1890.[12] Legal activist, Reginald Heber Smith, in 1919, wrote a text titled "Justice and the Poor" that was crucial in the advancement

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[11] Justice and the Poor. Reginald Heber Smith. 1919

[12] "History of Civil Legal Aid" - National Legal Aid and Defender Association http://www.nlada.org/About/About_HistoryCivil

of thought leadership around the necessity of pro-bono, eventually inspiring the American Bar Association to create the minimum pro-bono obligations that law firms today are required to uphold in their respective practices. Pro-bono soon became prevalent in fields outside of the legal industry, but the first trace of that can be found in 1942, when the Ad Council, a non-profit organization dedicated to the development of public service advertisements (PSAs), was formed. To deliver these critical and iconic messages (think Smokey Bear) to the American public, many key advertising agencies and design firms were leveraged on a pro-bono basis.[13] To this day, pro-bono has continued to be leveraged by non-profit organizations and government agencies in order to gather the same kind of response that more privileged clients can have as a result of their marketing and design budgets. Thanks to activists like Aaron Hurst, the founder of the Taproot Foundation, as well as government programs like the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy (CECP), and the Billion+ Change campaign, pro-bono is now valued as a resource that extends across a diverse range of fields and industries from Human Resources to Business Management to Graphic Design, and more. Great strides have been made, especially in the past 5 years, by campaigns that call for at least a 1% ongoing commitment to pro-bono, or an annual weekend-long hackathon of sorts to promote the aid of non-profit organizations. Thanks to these initiatives, pro-bono is now a term that is in the vocabulary of many businesses, big and small.

While many of the examples we have gone through thus far show a clear benefit relationship and hierarchy between customer and business, there are also examples of "free" in business in which the individual seemingly has the leg up on the business. Key word here is "seemingly." These kinds of engagements actually are known as a value exchange. Similar to ancient methods of bartering, value exchange calls for a trade, of sorts, though the immediate trade, on the side of the consumer, actually seems non-existent. Two strong examples of value exchange in contemporary business include platforms that require you to contribute a bit about yourself as well as digital products that are heavily populated with ads. The two, in fact, go hand in hand. Think about Facebook. You don't pay anything to use it, right? You never will, in fact. Well, that's just what it feels like. In reality, Facebook (and really any free social networking platform) is profiting big time off of you, and you indeed are paying them, just in ways that aren't so obvious on the surface level. By acquiring data about yourself, people

[13] Taproot Foundation - history of pro-bono

like Facebook are able to leverage your information in the interest of ad providers that are willing to pay the big bucks just to get an ad in front of someone that is just like you. Google is the same way. Many people don't realize this, but Google's primary value exchange between customer and business is your willingness to search using their platform. Like Facebook, Google is "seemingly free," but in reality, you are paying through your comprehensive search preferences.

The final example of "free" in business that I would like to take a look at is the PAY WHAT YOU WANT model (commonly referred to as PWYW). While PWYW can be traced far back in time to the days of street performers, the model entered the mainstream's consciousness in 2007 through a successful use of the model by Radiohead, in conjunction with the release of their new album, In Rainbows. Quite timely, the album itself was released at a time when conversations around the value of digital music were at an all-time high. People were pirating left and right in the early '00s, and not many musicians knew what to do about it. Radiohead decided to take it upon themselves to leverage this reality in music as an opportunity by allowing fans to make their own decisions regarding the value of their music. As a result, listeners could choose to pay nothing and receive a brand new album at no cost, or, perhaps, pay a few hundred bucks out of gratitude for the chance to determine value on our own. The results were groundbreaking as it was quickly found that the listeners, after averaging all transactions, were actually paying slightly more for the album then the traditional price point. The model is now being used more frequently, specifically amongst musicians, but also by authors, and continued success has been found as a result of putting a little faith on the fans.

As we've been able to see, business models, at large, carry heavy lineages. Though Gillette could never have even imagined a world in which people would make in-app purchases, his model has lived on in such a drastically different technological landscape. Likewise, marketers during the great depression likely could never fathom the idea that society would someday prefer to "give one" instead of "get one." Funny how that works, isn't it?

ILLUSTRATION BY SHAUNA LYNN PANCZYSZYN

b.

The Giving Gap

BY: MATTHEW MANOS

INTRODUCING A MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE "FREE" AN INTEGRAL COMPONENT OF SERVICE-ORIENTED BUSINESS IN ORDER TO FULFILL A NEW SOCIAL OBLIGATION.

WHEN YOU ARE MAKING A BILLION DOLLARS A YEAR, it is easy to donate a million to a good cause. When you are a small business, or an independent contractor, likely bringing in revenue that is barely pushing 6 figures, it is really hard to give back. We've seen lots of interesting business models in product-focused business over the years such as the One Laptop per Child initiative, and the infamous "One for One" model from TOMS that proceeded it, but what model of business can be created to turn philanthropy into an integral and viable component of service-oriented business? Why does giving back always have to be seen as an extra-curricular activity for service providers? We hear about billionaires like Bill Gates giving away half of their net-worth upon death, but is that kind of impact really limited to the mega-rich? Do we really need to die before we can make an impact? Is philanthropy an activity reserved solely for the rich? Do the historic characteristics of a philanthropist remain relevant in today's society and economic landscape? We have seen great progress in the development of corporate social responsibility programs amongst the Fortune 500 class, but what about small business? Why do we hold big business to such a high degree of scrutiny when it comes to giving back, but when small businesses do nothing we don't even take a second look?

These questions keep me up at night, and the act of truly answering these questions will forever continue to be my life's work. So far, however, I have been able to chip at the surface through the organization of my own concerns and observations into what can be filtered down into 3 dilemmas. Collectively, these dilemmas define "the giving gap."

01. Society Only Expects 1% of Businesses to Engage in Philanthropy.
02. The Definition of "Philanthropy" is Outdated and Limiting.
03. Consultants Expect Compensation In Exchange for Social Impact.

Dilemma #1. SOCIETY ONLY EXPECTS 1% OF BUSINESSES TO ENGAGE IN PHILANTHROPY.

There is a very loud majority that is critical of big business. We demand transparency. We want to know how and when corporate executives are spending their money. Billionaires are an easy target for public scrutiny, and as a result, we maintain high expectations when it comes to philanthropic engagement amongst big businesses. It is questionable whether or not all of this criticism has actually led to any real change in regards to corporate greed, but there are a few tangible things that have come of these high standards over the years: a spike in CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) initiatives, the more frequent publication of Corporate Giving Reports, and a steady rise in annual contributions to non-profit organizations from big businesses and the C-level executives that run them.

The US census documents 27.28 million businesses in the United States. Of these 27.28 million, less than 1% can be categorized as a "big business." This leaves us with 27.26 million entities in the private sector that can be categorized as "small business." While it is crucial to continue holding the highest of expectations in regards to corporate giving amongst the Fortune 500 class, it is a huge missed opportunity to not leverage over 27 million revenue generating businesses for the greater good.

Why has this not been talked about before? Why didn't the Occupy protesters make any signs against that mom-and-pop shop down the street? Why do we hold big business to such a high degree of scrutiny when it comes to giving back, but when small businesses do nothing we don't even take a second look? The answer to these questions is actually quite simple: small businesses don't make as much money as big businesses. The idea that small business owners would engage in philanthropy to the same level that a Fortune 500 company does has been accepted as "impossible." Unfortunately, however, these assumptions have been made without first exploring new, more creative, models of impact that allow for giving to coexist with business success instead of solely proceeding it.

Dilemma #2. THE DEFINITION OF "PHILANTHROPY" IS OUTDATED AND LIMITING.

Contrary to popular belief, the act of being philanthropic does not necessarily begin or end at the stroke of a pen. Instead, philanthropy has the opportunity to go far beyond the power of monetary transaction alone through the donation of time because talent is a multiplier.

Non-profit organizations are spending billions upon billions of dollars each year on service-provider fees,. Very often these dollars are being spent ineffectively. Imagine the impact that billions of spare dollars could have. When an organization is able to save valuable resources, they are able to immediately re-invest those dollars directly into their cause. Pro-bono work is necessary. While spending increases each year, funding decreases. In 2013, we saw cuts to funding for non-profit sector from the federal government totaling $62 Billion, but in 2012 foundation money only totaled 46 Billion. The social sector is becoming drained of resources, and traditional philanthropy clearly doesn't cut it anymore. We need new models of philanthropy that will allow non-profit organizations to save valuable resources in order to clear up the social sector's economic disaster.

The old model of business designs for the short term. The old model of wealth is to introduce philanthropy after the riches. The new model of business, however, designs for the long term. It designs for wealth and philanthropy to come simultaneously.

A lack of funding is only an issue if there are a lot of expenses. As business owners, freelancers, and entrepreneurs, we need to do our part by making giving back an integral component of our business.

Dilemma #3. CONSULTANTS EXPECT COMPENSATION IN EXCHANGE FOR SOCIAL IMPACT.

> "They say they are helping dying children and others in need, but thousands of charities actually spend millions getting marketing executives rich."[14]

[14] http://www.cnn.com/2013/06/13/us/worst-charities/index.html?hpt=hp_t1

- KRIS HUNDLEY AND KENDALL TAGGART, CNN

In her famous account of Adolf Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem, Hannah Arendt introduced the expression "the banality of evil." Her concept was that some of history's greatest evils, such as those that took place in Nazi Germany, were actually not executed by the hands of sociopaths, but instead by every day people. Under this ethos, Arendt explains that the actions of these ordinary people are committed due to the perception that their participations were "normal" thanks to the fact that the root of their acts were mandated by figures of authority in their state.

In recent years, concepts that serve as the antithesis of the pro-bono movement have become more and more popularized. Thought leaders can be found proclaiming the concept that non-profits should be rewarded by maintaining high overhead in order to scale their message through the power of marketing. While the intentions of such ideas are seemingly authentic, the result of their execution would be catastrophic to the social sector. There is an overwhelming consensus amongst consultants that we deserve to be paid for the social impact that we create, but what is not understood is the reality that when we charge for the work, our own social impact is void.

The widely accepted idea that "social impact" is something that can be done with a direct profit-margin is one of the biggest unknown problems of our time. It is a new kind of banal evil, and it is plaguing the social sector. As consultants, we do not posses the ability create social impact, but our clients do. We are nothing more than facilitators of social change. It may be hard to accept, but as service providers the only chance we have at creating social impact is by refusing payment in order to allow those who are creating social impact do so with an abundance of resources. The success of an organization's marketing campaign is not at all related to a budget so long as those who are leading the campaign do their best work regardless of getting a pay check or not.

In "What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets", Michael Sandel presents two essential moral frameworks: Fairness and Corruption. While the fairness objection "points to the injustice that can arise when people buy and sell things under conditions of inequality or dire economic necessity," the corruption objection "... points to the degrading effect of market valuation and exchange on certain goods and practices."[15] Under this objection, Sandel explains

[15]What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets. Michael Sandel. Page 111

that the authenticity of moral and civic "goods" can actually be diminished or corrupted if they enter a traditional economic mindset of "buy" and "sell".

When charities are positioned in the economy to not profit and depend on public donations with less autonomy of businesses, making a profit from a disadvantaged sector falls under the fairness objection. Perhaps it isn't ethical, efficient, or fair for the nonprofit industry to spend nearly $8 billion each year on design and marketing expenditures in the US. Sure, awesome marketing campaigns and excellent strategic plans are incredibly important for charities, but the enormous allocation of funds and energy in purchasing these services are entirely misplaced. This is especially true because the primary mission of a non-profit organization is not to have the best designed campaign and social media platform comparable to their competitors, but rather to serve an under-served community efficiently & effectively. For the type of work nonprofits do to bridge the inequality gaps, they themselves are held back and limited by the absurd invoices from service-providers they are receiving in their mailbox each week. Pro-bono services via the private sector are incredibly critical (and fair) in the effort to enable non-profit organizations to focus their energy on what they should be: their impact.

c.

Small Business = Big Impact

BY: MUBEEN KHUMAWALA*, JENNIFER LAWSON
& YVONNE SIU TURNER

Every day, small businesses across America share their time and talent with their communities to advance social good. As the wave of employee volunteerism swells within corporate America, small businesses are not being left behind. Just as they are a driving force for job creation in America, small businesses are also a driving force of skills-based volunteering (SBV) and pro bono. They are the engines of innovation and of compassion-driven social impact in communities. America's small businesses have embraced SBV, a unique approach to community engagement which harnesses employees' skills, knowledge, and passions, to help build the capacity of nonprofit organizations. This essay will outline the social and business benefits of skills-based service, share stories of how small businesses have implemented programs that work for them, and offer recommendations and resources for building effective volunteer programs to meet the unique needs of small businesses.

Who are small businesses?

The Small Business Administration defines a small business as an independent business having fewer than 500 employees. In aggregate, small businesses make up 99.7 percent of U.S. employer firms and 49.2 percent of private-sector employment. The figures have gradually increased over the past two decades. Small firms accounted for 64 percent of the net new jobs created between 1993 and 2011.[16] The dynamic and varied nature of small business makes workplace volunteering a fantastic match offering benefits to both business and community.

Volunteering in corporate America is on the rise, and small businesses are part of this growing trend. According to the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy (CECP), 50% of companies offered pro bono service programs in 2013, up from 34% in 2010.[17] Competing for talent, ensuring employee retention, and sustaining a competitive advantage are all compelling reasons for small businesses to start and scale volunteer programs.

How can small businesses benefit from corporate volunteerism?

Corporate volunteerism helps recruit top talent. According to research by the CEB Corporate Leadership Council, almost half of HR executives expect turnover and hiring to increase.[18] Similarly, a 2011 Deloitte Volunteer IMPACT Survey, more than 60 percent of job-seekers between the 1980s and the early 2000s, stated that a business-sponsored volunteer program would influence them "when choosing

[16]"Frequently Asked Questions," September 2012, Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, 04 August 2014 <http://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/FAQ_Sept_2012.pdf>.
[17]Michael Stroik, "Behind the Numbers: What do Trends in Corporate Giving Mean for You?," 21 October 2013, Committee Encouraging Effective Philanthropy, 07 August 2014, < http://cecp.co/press-room/cecp-insights/item/61-behind-the-numbers-what-do-trends-in-corporate-giving-mean-for-you?.html>.
[18]Brian Kropp, "Maximizing the Effectiveness of Corporate Volunteer Programs," 23 July 2014, CEB Corporate Leadership Council, 23 July 2014, Webinar.

between two potential jobs with the same location, responsibilities, pay, and benefits."

Employees develop strong leadership skills. Employees reap rewards when they volunteer. By offering their expertise, volunteers are able to refine and enhance their job skills while increasing networking opportunities; this is particularly poignant for recent college graduates. AAA of Northern California has found a positive correlation between employee promotions and those who volunteer. The company attributes this relationship to increased visibility of employee skills to management.[19] Similarly, in another research survey by Deloitte, close to 90% of pro bono and skills based volunteer respondents said they had a positive impact in developing managerial and leadership skills across areas such as relationship management, problem solving, and communication skills.[20] Unlike investing in courses or conferences, service based volunteering provides an impactful and cost effective alternative for developing leadership and talent. That offers multiple benefits to the volunteer employee and to the business. Indeed, according to new research from True Impact, skills-based volunteers are 142% more likely to report job-related skills-gains from traditional volunteers.

Volunteering promotes teamwork. In the 2013 Health and Volunteering study by the UnitedHealth Group showed 81% of employed volunteers who volunteered through their workplace agreed that volunteering together strengthens relationships among colleagues.

Volunteering promotes better health. In the same study by the United Health Group, over three-quarters of people who volunteered in the past twelve months said that volunteering has made them feel physically healthier— in fact, most say that one of the reasons they decided to volunteer was the belief that doing volunteer work would be good for their health. Add to that, volunteers are more likely than non-volunteers to consider themselves in excellent or very good health, and they are more likely to say that their health has improved over the past 12 months. There is an even stronger connection between volunteering and mental/emotional health. Volunteering helps us to manage stress— the majority of people who have volunteered in the past 12 months say that volunteering has lowered their stress levels. Of course, if people are

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[19]Kelly M. Kilcrease, "Increasing Small Business Volunteerism: Overcoming the Cost Factor," March/April 2007, Ivey Business Journal, 07 August 2014, <http://iveybusinessjournal.com/topics/strategy/increasing-small-business-volunteerism-overcoming-the-cost-factor#.U-N-5_ldXjX>.
[20]Kaveeta Chandrani, et al., "Developing Leaders from within," Deloitte, 08 August 2014.

feeling healthier because they are volunteering, they will feel better at work as well. But in addition to the great benefit of employees who feel healthier, employers find that volunteering employees are less stressed, more engaged, and are developing important work and "people skills". That makes employers feel good too.[21]

Volunteering strengthens connections to community— and giving back makes good PR. Getting involved in a civic endeavor puts you in contact with people you might never meet otherwise. Some of these individuals will have knowledge and experience that may prove helpful to your business.[22] An example of this is Burt Brothers Tires, a small tire franchise in northern Utah, which received national coverage on Forbes.com because they were regular participants in a local annual Coats-for-Kids community event. If the company had not earned such a well-deserved reputation in its community, it would not have garnered the attention of a major media outlet.[23]

Steve DiFillippo is the owner of Davio's, a 24-year-old Northern Italian steakhouse in Boston. Steve shifted 30%, or some $20,000, of the company's advertising budget to pro bono work. This year, he says, not a week goes by that the company doesn't offer its services for charity events, or give away gift cards. Last year, the frequency was every other week. "It's worth more to do charity work than to advertise in a local magazine," he says. "It's more like guerrilla marketing. People see that we're involved in the community."

Volunteering can grow your business. In times of economic recession, pro bono volunteering with nonprofits can motivate employees and foster goodwill. In the fall of 2008, Boston-based Studio G Architects, a Public Architecture firm, was hit particularly hard by the recession causing revenue to drop 30% from the prior year. Clients of the architectural firm had canceled or wait listed ten projects. With work slowing down, the company began providing 15 to 20 hours a week in pro bono services to keep employees occupied and attract future contracts. The company designed projects for various charities including a playground for severely handicapped children. This approach worked.

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[21]"Doing Good Is Good For You," 2013, United Health Group, 05 August 2014, <http://www.unitedhealthgroup.com/~/media/UHG/PDF/2013/UNH-Health-Volunteering-Study.ashx>.
[22]Lee Poleovoi, "Volunteering Is Good for Your Small Business," 14 January 2014, Intuit QuickBooks, 06 August 2014, <http://quickbooks.intuit.com/r/employees/volunteering-is-good-for-your-small-business/>.
[23]Ty Kiisel, "Small Business Week Special: Small Businesses Give Back To Their Communities," 20 June 2013, Forbes, 08 August 2014, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/tykiisel/2013/06/20/small-business-week-special-small-businesses-give-back-to-their-communities/>.

The projects later received full funding and Studio G obtained several contracts, which ranged in value from $16,000 to $100,000.[24]

Lastly, volunteering positively impacts the bottom line. The table below— provided by the CEB Corporate Leadership Council— compares two similar companies. The increased engagement level from a volunteer program results in a decrease in turnover and an increase in average revenue per employee.[25] Further, companies that engaged in corporate social responsibility show a 10-year return on equity that was 10 percent higher than their competitors.[26]

Yet, historical assumptions persist, implying that small businesses are leaving volunteering to large employers and multinational corporations.

While this may have been true in the past, today old paradigms are shifting. In fact, A Billion + Change, a national campaign to encourage more pro bono and skills based volunteering, found that half of the more than 500 companies that pledged over $2 billion worth of service in 2013 were small businesses.[27]

How does employee volunteerism look in small businesses?

In many ways, small businesses make ideal partners for their local nonprofits. Most smaller businesses have only a few locations and closer ties to their community as home to both customers and employees. These connections foster a deeper understanding of local needs and shared concerns. Small businesses also reflect the scale of community based non-profits; the average size of a small to mid-size nonprofit in the US is 21-124 employees and $15 million or less in annual revenue.[28] These similarities allow for the ability to offer services and support that match the capacity of the non-profit to receive, which in turn maximizes the benefit to all.

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[24] Raymond Flandez, "Pro Bono Work Helps Firms Fight Economic Slump," 1 September 2009, The Wall Street Journal, 11 August 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB125176720925874609?mg=reno64-wsj&url=http%3A%2F%2Fonline.wsj.com%2Farticle%2FSB125176720925874609.html>.

[25] Brian Kropp, "Maximizing the Effectiveness of Corporate Volunteer Programs," 23 July 2014, CEB Corporate Leadership Council, 23 July 2014, Webinar.

[26] Kelly M. Kilcrease, "Increasing Small Business Volunteerism: Overcoming the Cost Factor," March/April 2007, Ivey Business Journal, 07 August 2014 <http://iveybusinessjournal.com/topics/strategy/increasing-small-business-volunteerism-overcoming-the-cost-factor#.U-N-5_ldXjX>.

[27] "The Billion + Change Story: A First Look Inside the Largest Commitment of Corporate Pro Bono Service in History," A Billion + Change, 2013.

[28] "2013 Nonprofit Employment Trends Survey," Nonprofit HR Solutions, 2013. <http://www.nonprofithr.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2013-Employment-Trends-Survey-Report.pdf>.

For the non-profit, small businesses can also offer flexibility to work with volunteers during business hours. The smaller the company, the more flexibility its principals have in setting their schedules. Nonprofits will be more successful recruiting an architect or a consultant as a volunteer during the day than getting "release time" for an employee of a large corporation along with avoiding a bureaucratic maze of approval signoffs.[29]

Cost-related factors are the main deterrent to increasing volunteerism in small businesses. The three volunteer costs that must be addressed are worker productivity loss, employee compensation, and organizing the volunteer effort. Kelly M. Kilcrease, a professor at the University of New Hampshire at Manchester, suggests that to overcome productivity loss and compensation, small businesses should consider the following options when developing policies for employee volunteerism:

- Determine the maximum amount of time an employee can volunteer per fiscal year.
- Ensure proper training of employees (ability to cover others' assignments). This allows operations to continue when the employee is volunteering.
- Create flex time.
- Stagger work schedules for employees who wish to volunteer.

Even with these considerations, some small businesses do not have the personnel time to coordinate and control the volunteer effort because they don't have a Community Service or Human Resources department. Further, the costs of managing the volunteer projects are significant. According to a 2004 survey by CECP, the administrative costs associated with cash and non-cash contributions total approximately 5.5 percent of the company's giving. Kilcrease proposes that the solution to this problem comes from within the community itself. To control the administrative costs associated with volunteer programs, many small businesses can turn to their local institutes of higher education for connection to non-profits in need. Presently, multitudes of colleges/universities require students to perform a set

[29]Lee Poleovoi, "Volunteering Is Good for Your Small Business," 14 January 2014, Intuit QuickBooks, 06 August 2014, <http://quickbooks.intuit.com/r/employees/volunteering-is-good-for-your-small-business/>.

amount of community service hours to fulfill graduation requirements. Offering to lead or sponsor these teams offers a great connection to vetted volunteer opportunities. Nationwide, 60 percent of students reported that they volunteer in some charitable activity through their college. From this "service learning," as the community service is called, students gain new perspectives on society in relation to a specific course or discipline of study.

In this proposed model, everyone benefits; non-profits increase their volunteer pool, small businesses may increase their bottom line while improving their public image, and colleges create informed and caring graduates. In terms of implementation, the small business must be the catalyst as they hold control of the professional volunteers.[30]

How do you launch an employee volunteer program?

There are seven well-established practices of building an effective employee volunteer program.[31] For small businesses and those just starting out, focus on the following key factors:

1. DEVELOP A PLAN

- Identify the social, employee, and business goals for your volunteer program
- Assess your needs and competencies
- What unique skills and factors do your employees possess?
- Will you have internal buy-in from management?
- Consider whether you would like to align your volunteer program with a strategic area of focus for your business (such as education, nutrition or healthcare), or whether you would like your employees to determine which causes they volunteer for.
- Consider offering incentives and support resources for employees like paid time off and volunteer training or toolkits
- Assess the nonprofit's needs and readiness

[30]Kelly M. Kilcrease, "Increasing Small Business Volunteerism: Overcoming the Cost Factor," March/April 2007, Ivey Business Journal, 07 August 2014 <http://iveybusinessjournal.com/topics/strategy/increasing-small-business-volunteerism-overcoming-the-cost-factor#.U-N-5_ldXjX>.

[31] "Seven Practices of Effective Employee Volunteer Programs: An Evaluation Framework," Points of Light, June 2014. http://www.pointsoflight.org/corporate-institute/resources

- Identify nonprofits that might be a good fit with your company's goals. You might consider working with a HandsOn Affiliate to connect you with an appropriate nonprofit.
- Develop a scope of work
- Work with the nonprofit to create agreed-upon expectations.
- Determine how the project's success and impact, both to the nonprofit and the community, will be measured.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

- Match volunteers to projects based on their interests and skill-sets, or encourage them to find a volunteer opportunity through online matching services like VolunteerMatch, Catchafire, SkillsforChange.com, or nonprofits in your company's existing portfolio of community partners.
- Maintain open lines of communication between the pro bono team and the nonprofit.
- Track and report volunteer hours and the value of their contributions.
- Monitor project milestones. Re-assess and adjust program scope if necessary.
- Build interest in your SBV program by inviting volunteers from other businesses to share their experiences, or by allowing employees to suggest their favorite nonprofits or causes.
- Evaluation
- Measure the project's success and impact to the nonprofit and the community against the indicators and metrics outlined in the scope of work.
- Issue a survey (consider Survey Monkey or other web-based survey tools) to your employees and their managers to assess the impact of their volunteer assignments on: engagement, skill-development, leadership development, and other factors important to you.

3. RECOGNITION

- Recognize and celebrate volunteers for their work and their project's results. Consider an employee volunteer spotlight in your business newsletter or an employee volunteer award.
- Gather testimonials, pictures, and stories from your nonprofit partners and employee volunteers and communicate this internally and externally to local and national media.[32]

There are several different SBV models to choose from. It is important to choose a model that best suits the business, work culture, and targeted nonprofits.

- MARATHON MODEL: Conduct your pro bono project within a short time frame (usually 24 hours) to deliver a mass volume of services.
- OPEN-ENDED MODEL: Make your services available to a set number of nonprofits on an ongoing basis.
- MICRO-VOLUNTEERING: Expand service opportunities to employees with all types of schedules through micro-volunteering opportunities, including SkillsforChange.com.
- COACHING AND MENTORING: Do your employees have culinary, hospitality, retail, or tutoring skills? Partner with a nonprofit and lend your functional expertise.
- STANDARDIZED TEAM PROJECTS: Employees are placed on a team with set roles, responsibilities and deliverables.
- LOANED EMPLOYEE MODEL: Grant your employees an approved and compensated leave of absence to offer volunteer services to a nonprofit.

For more research, resources, and toolkits on building an employee volunteer program, visit www.pointsoflight.org/corporate-institute/resources or www.abillionpluschange.org/resources.

Small businesses— by their nature closer in scale to the nonprofits they serve and in touch with community needs— are uniquely positioned to be great champions of skills-based service. From coast

[32]"Skills-Based Volunteering for Small Businesses: Getting Started," A Billion + Change, 07 August 2014, <http://www.pointsoflight.org/corporate-institute/resources/mid-sized-and-small-enterprise-volunteering>.

to coast, small businesses are sharing their strategic planning, design, communications, technology, consulting services, and more to help build nonprofit capacity. Small businesses are also discovering the power of pro bono as an effective way to attract, retain, and develop great talent, improve community relationships, and build a competitive advantage in the market. Unlike the largest in the Fortune 100, small businesses— just like their community partners— have unique challenges and needs, so please use the data, examples, and guidance in this essay to build a pro bono program that works for you. With your help, small businesses will continue to be powerful drivers of social change.

**Mubeen Khumawala is a contributing author as a Pro Bono fellow to Points of Light courtesy of the Quarterback program, connecting pre-MBA candidates to service opportunities. www.qtrback.org.*

d.

Building A Very Nice Design Studio

BY: MATTHEW MANOS

HOW A MOVEMENT TO ASSIST SMALL BUSINESSES IN FULFILLING THEIR OBLIGATION TO BE VERY NICE BEGAN.

I launched verynice in 2008 from an apartment while attending UCLA, but the origins were actually a few years before that and can actually be traced back to when I was 16 years old, in 2005, which is when I started my freelance design career. I had started taking this class on "digital art." I was learning Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign... a lot of the basics of the kind of mediums I work in today. I got really into it, and a lot of my family members could really tell that I was getting into it. Eventually, in order to support this newfound passion, my godmother who was studying art in Australia at the time, decided to send me a CD Rom disk with a pirated copy of Photoshop. Shortly before receiving this disc, I had bought my first apple computer. I had everything I needed to kick off a career in design. Luckily, being a high school student, I also had a lot of free time. Working late into the night, each night, I taught myself things here and there in order to expand upon my understanding of the software. I found, however, that I was spending most of my time manipulating photographs to make it so that my friends would have crazy eyes and hair. Needless to say, I was hungry for some meaningful work, and was eager to make something that someone could actually use. This idea of usefulness, something at the core of design, was a real inspiring concept to me. As a result, I kept my eyes open for a project that could help me fulfill that need.

Back then, and still to this day, I spent a lot of time skateboarding. Every weekend, I would go to the skate park with my dad in Sunnyvale, California. Something really interesting happened one day when I was sitting on one of the ledges taking a break. Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed a man in a wheelchair jump into the bowl. Needless to say, this was a pretty unusual sighting, especially upon realizing that he was actually more talented then the rest of us. Out of curiosity, I decided to move a little closer to him. Upon doing so, I realized that we was not alone, but instead with a bunch of little kids who were also in wheelchairs. I couldn't just sit there any more, so I decided to approach the man and spark up a conversation. I learned that he was the founder of a non-profit organization, which at the time, was known as Wheelchair Skater. The organization had a simple mission—help kids that are disabled get around a skate park. That was a really simple concept that he had, but it was the first time that I ever met the founder of a non-profit organization, and I immediately became overwhelmed by the passion that radiated from him. I realized, at that moment, that there really is something to a non-profit's founder... they have a passion that is so pure and so authentic that they would die for the cause they serve. The light bulb went off, and I quickly determined that this was the type of person that I wanted to work with for the rest of my life. Even more immediately, I knew that this was the guy that I wanted to help by utilizing my newly acquired Photoshop "skills" and I volunteered to design a few promotional stickers for him, thus marking the beginning of my freelance design career. To be honest, I never would have imagined how pivotal a moment the creation of those silly stickers would have had on my life at the time.

After high school, I got into the Design Media Arts program at UCLA. The moment I arrived, I decided similarly that I did not want to just be doing class assignments, but instead wanted to be doing more

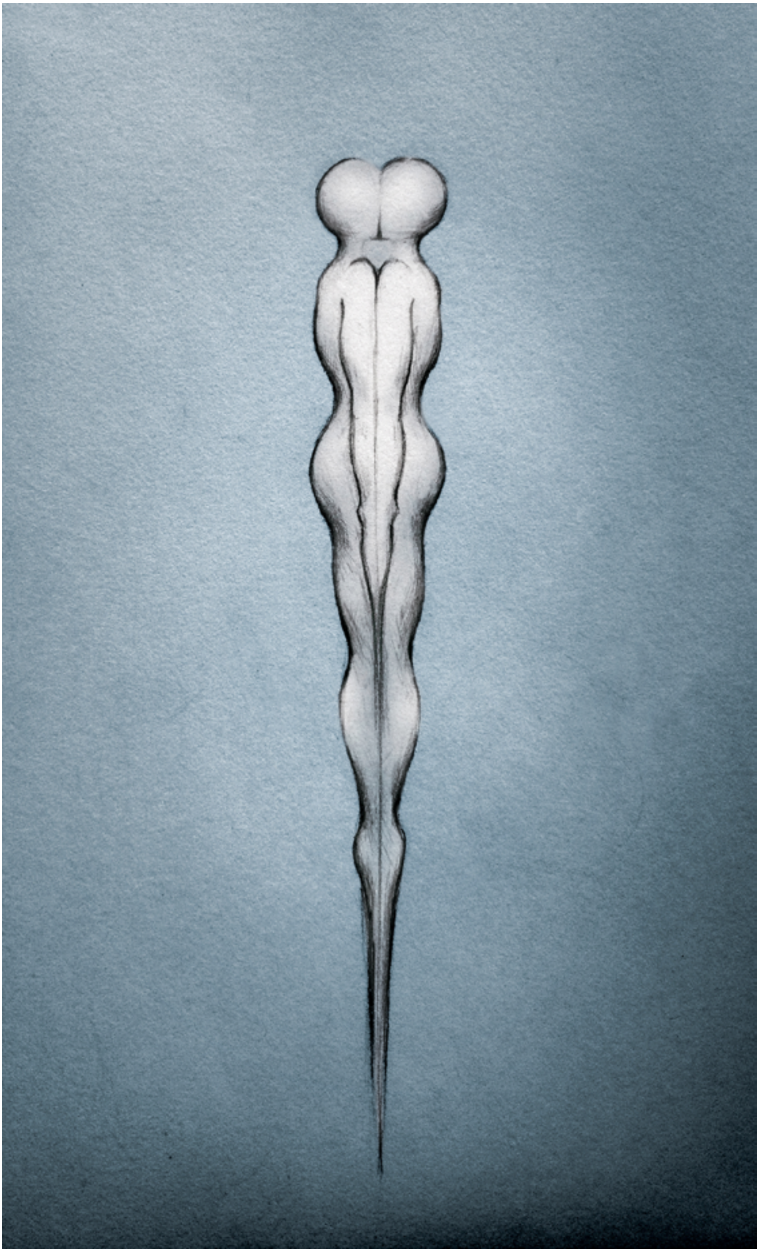

ILLUSTRATION BY SUN YEO

work for real people, organizations, businesses, etc. As a result, I found myself doing a lot of volunteer design work for student groups. Over the course of my first three years on campus, I had worked with over 30 groups. Those groups, along with Wheelchair Skater, served as the basis of verynice's clientele today as well as the connections that we continue to work with. My sophomore year of college, specifically, I began doing this work at a much higher volume than ever before, and began to take on many clients simultaneously. It was then that really felt the need to put a name to all of this. That is when there was this year where I began to reflect on what it was that I wanted to do in order to paint a picture for what this all could look like. In the same timeframe, I was taking on a lot of internships. I realized, through those experiences, that there was a huge need to rethink the way that the design industry operated, especially in its treatment of non-profit organizations. This realization came, specifically, from seeing first hand how much these studios were charging for non-profit work or, the flip side, how little an appreciation there was for pro-bono work. It became clear to me that the design industry was one that favored profit over purpose. Around this time, I began to ask myself: "what would a very nice design studio look like?" I wanted to know what a studio that is actually very nice in both its intentions and its offerings would look like, and that planted the seed of our business today: verynice.

In the early days, the business started as a side project with a model that was 100% pro-bono. At night, on the weekends, and even during class, I would help organizations at no cost. At that point in my life, I was not trying to think of this as a career, but instead as something that was fun that I wanted to do. I always sort of assumed that I would continue to do this type of volunteer work and would just go get some job at an ad agency to pay the bills. During my senior year of college, I remember reflecting on the possibilities that I could take and thinking to myself... God, I don't want to do that. I really don't want a day job. I really don't want this to be something that I just do at night because I knew that I would never be able to have the "impact" that I wanted to have if I did not make this a full-time effort. It was that entire year that the business model began to really evolve. It went from 80% pro-bono to 70%, to 60%, and then by the time we hit year 2 in 2010, I finally landed on this "50% pro-bono model" that we continue to use to this day. What I realized was that that percentage, and that whole idea of spending over half your time giving back, philosophically, was something that I was really proud of, and was something that I really wanted to share with the world. I believe that if we make giving an extracurricular activity (something that takes up less than half our time on a daily basis), there is no way we can have the impact that we need to have. The idea of giving over half of my work away for free is something that inspires and challenges me every day.

verynice has now grown to become a global design and innovation consultancy based in Los Angeles that gives over half of its work away for free to non-profit organizations. What we actually do is quite a range of things because we work with a wide variety of clients. On the for-profit side we work with large corporations, small businesses, individuals, and startups. On the pro-bono side, we work with global non-profits, small community-based organizations, grassroots initiatives, and even student groups. Because of this diversity, we have been able to gain a lot of skills that have not only helped one sector or the other, but have actually transcended both. For example, when we're helping a non-profit organization, we are taking a lot of the skills we have learned in helping larger for-profit companies and applying them in the same way. As a result, we have been able to help non-profits think more like for-profits do in order to operate more effectively and vice versa, we help for-profit companies think more like non-profits organizations do in terms of having a social impact or a cause-driven mission.

verynice's mission has two components to it. The first component is to prove that small businesses, especially design studios and consultancies can do a lot of philanthropy. I think that very often in society, we will hold big businesses very accountable to giving back to their community at some level, but when a small business does nothing, we don't even do a double take. We want to show that small businesses should be held accountable to contributing to the same level of impact. The second component is to alleviate expenses from non-profit organizations. According to Harvard Business Review, every single year, non-profit organizations collectively, in the United States alone, will allocate close to 8 billion dollars toward marketing and design expenditures... toward people like me. That is the amount of money that they literally set aside for these kinds of services. Part of our mission by showing that a model like ours is possible is to inspire other marketing and design agencies to stop charging non-profit organizations for their services because if those expenses didn't exist, and there was just a spare 8 billion dollars laying around, imagine the impact that could be made with that money if it were going towards the cause itself.

At time of writing (2014), verynice is currently comprised of three offices spanning Los Angeles, New York, and Austin. There are about 15 of us that work out of our offices, but something that is unique about the way we work is that we leverage a staffing model that can be referred to as "social production." Similar to crowdsourcing, we have a large group of people that we can tap into, but the key difference is that these are all personal connections of ours. We have over 350 people, worldwide, that help us out on pro-bono services for our non-profit work as well as paid contractors for our for-profit work. We have now worked with over 500 clients, over 300 of which were done on a pro-bono or discounted basis. All of the pro-bono services that we have donated have now added up to just over $1,500,000. The work that we've done spans 40 countries and 6 continents.

While all of these accomplishments are impressive, they are simply not enough. The moment we realized that non-profit organizations are spending close to 8 billion U.S. dollars per year on marketing and design expenses, while knowing we have only been able to save these organizations over 1 Million US Dollars over the course of half a decade, we began to understand that we could no longer tackle this issue alone. That realization, largely, is the reason you are reading this book right now—it is the first of many new initiatives from the studio that will aim to open-source our 50% pro-bono business model in order to replicate our impact across the world and come several steps closer to eradicating non-profit expenses. Will you join us?

e.

The New Game

BY: ANDREW GOTTLIEB

In the journey of entrepreneurship, you will face a dilemma that will alter the face of your company for months and years ahead. For me and many other millennial entrepreneurs, this situation is whether we want to play the Old Game or New Game.

According to GameChangers 500[33], the Old Game consists of:

[33] gamechangers500.org

- Maximizing profit-at-all-cost.
- Prioritizing initiatives that maximize profit.
- Treating people like human resources; get the most output for the least cost.
- Minimizing your environmental footprint if it's profitable to do so.

On the other hand, GameChangers 500 considers the New Game to be:

- Maximizing benefit to people and the planet.
- Prioritizing initiatives that help you meet your mission.
- Treating people like human beings; empower employees and have a positive impact on all stakeholders.
- Minimizing your environmental footprint because it's the right thing to do.

Within the first handful of months of launching No Typical Moments, I lost my why for starting the business. As I quit my job with only a few thousand dollars saved, I had a very short window to break even on my expenses. As a result of this stress, I was aggressively pursuing any client that wanted to work with my company. The altruistic aspirations I had as an idealistic college student were slowly, but surely dying.

After some reflection, I realized that there wouldn't be a point of continuing on my own unless I felt that my work was making the world a better place.

I then remembered Matt's speech from TEDxCMU and his initiative to donate 50% of his client work towards pro-bono projects with non-profits. My intuition told me that adopting this type of philanthropic model of serving others would not only help me rediscover my why, but push the bottom line forward.

Serendipitously, while doing pro-bono work with a Pittsburgh based non-profit named Haitian Families First, I brought up my idealistic vision of one day connecting with Matt and having him mentor my company through this process. It just so happened that my friend at Haitian Families First was friends with Matt and immediately made an introduction.

Adopting a philanthropic component into the business model at No Typical Moments has served my organization well for a plethora of reasons. These include:

- Helping me discover my why:
  As mentioned previously, serving under-served non-profit organizations helped me rediscover my why for starting No Typical Moments. It allowed me regain a sense of purpose and direction to believe that my work is making the world a better place.

- Building a portfolio
  As any business owner can tell you, it's very difficult to make a sale without a handful of testimonials to support your product or service. When I just launched the company, I only had two case studies. However, after donating so much of my time to non-profits, No Typical Moments had more than tripled that number.

- Creating a differentiation factor
  There are hundreds of people out there claiming to be social media experts. Some of them are, while some are pretenders just attempting to win one over with less tech savvy professionals. By creating a model focused on giving back to humanity, it allowed No Typical Moments to stand out from the average social media agency.

- Networking with paying clients
  One of the best ways to gain access to more clients is to have an introduction come from a trusted friend or colleague. However, you have to build trust with that individual before they'd be willing to open up their network to you. Almost all of the non-profits we did pro-bono work with were willing to make introductions to their friends who they believed had the marketing budget for these services.

- Being accepted to Awesomeness Fest
  In order to gain acceptance to Awesomeness Fest, you have to be doing something pretty amazing with your career. I was accepted into the conference because of the unique way No Typical Moments approached work.

- Meeting really cool non-profits
  Some of the kindest individuals you'll meet on this planet

work in the non-profit industry. They are unconcerned with money and live their lives in the service of others. By associating with these individuals, it helped me stay grounded as No Typical Moments continued to expand. Making a lot of money is great, but it's useless unless your work makes a difference in peoples lives. That sense of fulfillment is what makes it all worth it.

- Contributing to humanity
  One of the proudest moments I've had as an entrepreneur was when we helped Haitian Families First raise over $13,000 on an Indiegogo campaign. All of this money went directly towards their work in Haiti. It was very fulfilling to know how much of a difference our efforts made in helping them raise that money to transform lives.

I hope that the main takeaway you have from Matt's work at verynice is to discover your own personal why. Perhaps you want to join Matt in his journey of philanthropic work. On the other hand, maybe it stimulates the creative juices and you decide to end homelessness in the United States. Whatever your conclusion is, the ability to start a movement begins by dipping your toes in the water and believing that it's possible.

f.

6 Reasons Why You Should Give Half Your Work Away For Free

BY: MATTHEW MANOS

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN FOR GOOD MAGAZINE—UNEDITED VERSION

THE FOLLOWING POST IS A TRANSCRIPT OF AN ESSAY BY MATTHEW MANOS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN SEPTEMBER, 2013 FOR GOOD MAGAZINE. THIS TEXT BELOW REPRESENTS THE ORIGINAL "AUTHOR'S CUT" AS IT IS UNEDITED AND IS SLIGHTLY LONGER THAN THE VERSION THAT WAS INITIALLY PUBLISHED.

Since starting my freelance design career at the age of 16, I have been giving the majority my work away for free. In 2008, I decided to make that tendency a "thing" by launching verynice, a global design and innovation consultancy that gives over half of its work away for free to non-profit organizations. Over the course of 5 years, we have been able to actually perfect a business model that relies on substantial volunteerism and, as a result, we have been able to grow the business to be home to a volunteer staff of over 250 people in order to help hundreds of non-profit organizations across the globe save over $1 Million. By institutionalizing a 50% pro-bono commitment, giving back has become an integral component of our business, and now we want to help other freelancers, entrepreneurs, and small businesses do the same.

Questions likely running through your head: when/why/how would you possibly do this? Why is it so important to give over 50% of your work away for free? Well, here are 6 reasons:

Low expenses for a non-profit results in higher impact

Every year, in the United States alone, non-profit organizations will allocate close to 8 billion dollars toward marketing and design expenditures. It is at the core of our mission at verynice to allow organizations to re-invest those resources back into their cause in order to allow them to generate more impact. Can you imagine what could be done with a spare 8 billion dollars, per year? The possibilities are endless.

Seeing giving back as a side-project cripples our chance to make change.

Change only occurs when people start to focus. Giving back and volunteerism at large is often seen as an extracurricular activity that is initiated after work hours, maybe even during the weekend. If we want to get serious about making an impact, it is time to find news way to make volunteerism an integral component of our day-to-day lives and businesses.

Good karma is good business

The question: "so what do you get out of this?" comes up frequently. Aside from good karma, giving a substantial amount of your time and resources to an organization or an individual can result in good business. By helping one another, you are able to form meaningful relationships—relationships are the basis of a successful career.

Philanthropy isn't just for the old guys

Bill Gates and Warren Buffett have become the poster boys of philanthropy. This is great, but it has transformed giving back into this unobtainable act. The old model of business designs for the short term. The old model of wealth is to introduce philanthropy after the riches. The new model of business, however, designs for the long term. It designs for wealth and philanthropy to come simultaneously.

When you learn to be resourceful, you can become a better innovator

When you are working on projects with absolutely no budgets to back them, you find ways to become very resourceful. This isn't a new idea. Working under restrictions has long been the method of success for many artists, so why not use that to your advantage? More money, more problems?

You are not that special.

I often look myself in the mirror and wonder: "when did your skills become worth upwards of $200/ hour?" Professionals raise rates gradually over time as they gain more experience. It is a fact and an expectation. I would argue, though, that this rate inflation is not actually a result of an increase in value, but instead a genuine decrease in inspiration. As time goes on, we get tainted, and we need money as an incentive, but does it actually make us happier? That's up to you to decide, but next time you look at yourself in the mirror, remember that you aren't that special, and you aren't too good to help someone out at low or no cost. Try it!

Social impact is on a treadmill. Not because innovation is weakening, but because things are far too expensive. Far too much of an organizational budget is being handed over to people that are just like me. Far too little of an organization's budget is allocated toward making impact. If every business in the world gave half of their work away for free, we could allow humanity, and the progress toward actual change, to get off of that treadmill and run. Join me in a commitment to give half of your work away for free, and discover what that means to you.

g.

Rendered Precarious: Working in the Future

BY: JAKE DUNAGAN

"I can always hire half of the precariat to algorithmically enslave the other half." Jay Gould, the notorious railroad baron, made that statement after the Great Railroad Strike of 1886. Well, maybe I'm paraphrasing a bit[34], but if he were alive today, he might say something like that. Precarity— the idea that our living is increasingly given over to uncertainty, instability, risk, and fear— seems to be increasing.[35] A rotting social safety net in many nations, the rise of automation and robotic workforces, efficiency-optimizing scheduling software, more unwanted part-time work, stagnant real incomes, and a host of other trends are driving a future of more stressful, more dehumanizing work. As observed in a recent New York Times article that chronicled the everyday impact on many workers today, "the entire apparatus for helping poor families is being strained by unpredictable work schedules, preventing parents from committing to regular drop-off times or answering standard questions on subsidy forms and applications for aid: 'How many hours do you work?' and 'What do you earn?'[36]"

But one person's flexploitation is another person's entrepreneurial empowerment. The cult of disruption requires unequal sacrificial offerings. Some of those same "disruptive" technologies are allowing people to escape the iron claw of bureaucratic corporate jobs, and scale up according to their own creativity and ambition. The so-called "creative class," usually associated with designers, consultants, artists, programmers, and other cultural service providers can now advertise and connect with clients much more easily and efficiently

[34]"I can hire one-half of the working class to kill the other half." Quoted in Foner, Philip Sheldon (1998). History of the Labor Movement in the United States Vol. 2: From the Founding of the A. F. of L. to the Emergence of American Imperialism (2nd ed.). International Publishers, Co., Inc. p. 51.
[35]Guy Standing, The Precariat: A New Dangerous Class.
[36]http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/13/us/starbucks-workers-scheduling-hours.html.

than ever before. The transaction costs (the return on time and energy investment) of being a freelancer or entrepreneur are lower than they've ever been, thanks to digital networks, easy access to online training and knowledge bases, and streamlined management and organizational applications. What dozens of people, with years of effort, and millions of dollars could do, can now be done by a few folks, over a weekend, with almost no money.[37]

Etsy and similar peer-to-peer markets allow people, and in Etsy's case 94% women, to sell their creations directly. Kickstarter, Indiegogo, and other crowdfunding sites now make it possible for independent artists, entrepreneurs, designers, and makers of all stripes find the financial sponsorship they need. Whether it's the absurdity of funding potato salad, the unleashed fandom of a beloved TV show, or the bold vision of creating personal submarines, if you can dream it, these days you have a good chance of making it.

But it's not only the creative class who are seeing new opportunities. Platforms like ODesk, Elance, and Mechanical Turk are connecting a global talent pool of job seekers with employers. This army of connected micro-taskers— from nuclear physicists in Pakistan, to housewives in the Philippines, to part-time nurses in Canada, and almost any other combination of location, class, and demographic category— have more and new ways to extract value from their contributions and labor, i.e. to work.

But while it's never been easier to be a freelancer, or to start a business, it is no less risky. The ad hoc, capricious, no benefits, opportunistic nature of work that has been associated with certain stereotypes (the itinerant artist on one end and seasonal migrant worker on the other) is moving from the marginal edges and into the mainstream, normalized mode of working. And as we burn the employment candle on both ends, we have to ask ourselves as a society, 'who benefits from this system?,' 'who suffers?,' and ultimately 'what kinds of lives do we really want?'

The answer to these questions, especially the last one, will differ depending on which segment of the precariat we ask. A Los Angeles maker-designer who's trying to launch a drone t-shirt delivery service in her time off from a meaningless retail job will have different experiences and desires than those of a recent immigrant to Austria

[37]Lightweight Innovation, http://www.iftf.org/our-work/people-technology/technology-horizons/lightweight-innovation/

from the Ukraine, who is trying to find a stable and sustainable income to support a family. But are there enough common experiences, common desires, and common needs to create solidarity amongst the precariat? Will the family who are renting out their guest room via AirBnB relate to the cabdrivers in Turin who are protesting Uber? Will the freelance programmer who's working on a new scheduling algorithm find a kinship with the barista who makes his latte and will be "clopening" (working the closing shift one night and the opening shift the next morning) the Starbucks? Is there enough "shared" in the sharing economy™ to bind the tired, the poor, the huddled workers who, whether by choice or necessity, have been rendered precarious? Are these groups peer enough in the p2p economy™? Does it matter?

Andrew Ross, in an insightful review of this "new geography of work,[38]" thinks that while this multi-class coalition might be fraught with cultural, political, and aesthetic contradictions and tensions, those bound by insecurity could find common cause and create a political movement with some teeth. This coalition would need to find a metaphor, mythology, or narrative that can confront and supplant the neoliberal construction that "the condition of entry into the new high-stakes lottery is to leave your safety gear at the door.[39]" Along with the story or vision around a "quality of work life," then, would come a coherent panoply of public policy recommendations, market innovations, and social experiments. The labor movement of the 20th century will provide little such material. The world of industrial capital has been transformed already, and shows no signs of settling into a predictable pattern, other than increased uncertainty.

I'm not prepared to offer a grand narrative for the precariat in this essay, but we can look at a few diverse examples of responses to precariousness that might provoke or inspire new ideas. It could be that pieces of all these strategies, and many more unmentioned here, will signal important directions for the future political-economies of work.

Strike Debt

Debt and precariousness go hand in hand. The rise in consumer and student loan debt since the 1980s has been staggering, and, many argue, has been the artificial fuel for the growth of the economy over the last generation. If, in order to participate fully and productively in

[38]Andrew Ross, "The New Geography of Work: Power to the Precarious?" Theory, Culture, and Society 25 (7-8). [35]Guy Standing, The Precariat: A New Dangerous Class.
[39]Ross, p. 36.

society, we have to take on debt, then we are again rendered precarious and vulnerable to control. One group, Strike Debt, advocates a broad social resistance movement to pull the rug out from under the debt system entirely. In their Debt Resistors Operations Manual, they lay out their values and their goal in clear terms:

> "We gave the banks the power to create money because they promised to use it to help up live healthier and prosperous lives—not to turn into frightened peons. They broke that promise. We are under no moral obligation to keep our promise to liars and thieves. In fact, we are morally obligated to find a way to stop this system rather than continuing to perpetuate it."

This direct, collective action on one aspect of precarity might appeal most strongly to "Occupy Wall Street" types today, but as people continue to be crushed by the weight of debt (over $1.2 trillion and counting in student loan debt alone), and under policies and regulations seemingly written by the lenders, debt-politics will only become more significant and influential.

Momentum Machines

When we think of quintessential low-skilled jobs, "flipping burgers" is unusually one of the first to spring to mind. Momentum Machines, a San Francisco robotics company, is attempting to "disrupt" the food service industry by creating automated systems that can make "the perfect hamburger." If successful, the company knows that it will be putting people out of work. And instead of simply letting the invisible hand of creative destruction run its course, the company has offered to give educational opportunities and engineering/design technical training to those who've been made redundant by their machines. While it is too soon to say whether this is a marketing or PR ploy (steel-washing?), Momentum Machines is at least acknowledging their role in a potential seismic shift in the system of work, and taking some responsibility for helping those who have been negatively impacted by their robots.

Basic Income

A raft of policy and regulatory responses to increasing precarity have been emerging over the years.[40] Mayors and city councils around

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[40] http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---actrav/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_164286.pdf

the U.S. are pushing regulations that will ensure some stability for employees, and unions and national issue campaigns like the Fair Workweek Initiative are helping lobby for more worker protections. However, business leaders are pushing back. Many like Scott Defire of the National Restaurant association argue that additional government oversight over operations "isn't conducive to a positive business climate.[41]"

But there are more radical ideas that might mitigate some of this need for "non-conducive" regulation. One that has been embraced by some on the right and the left of the political spectrum is a universal basic income, or basic income guarantee (BIG). A BIG would provide all adult citizens with an unconditionally awarded income.[42] In theory, this would replace most or all other forms of state welfare, and people could still work and earn income above what their BIG provides. While economists argue over whether a BIG would be financially viable for a nation, the momentum for some kind of guaranteed, universal award has grown. A rising class of disgruntled, precariously employed citizens who have been displaced and disempowered by the forces of automation, repression, debt, surveillance, and other forms of social control might soon demand a radical solution like BIGs, and those in power just might see the need to give it to them.[43]

Pro Bono for the Precariat?

As you've read throughout this volume, innovative social enterprises and business models are another vector for those working in various creative service industries to "give back" to others in order to effect systems level improvements in work, health, environment, and other domains. How might the "creative class" improve the lives of low-skilled precarious workers? Forming a collation of the precarious and lobbying for legislation and regulation that curb the worst abuses of employer power would be one possibility. But it could also be more direct and granular. As MIT retail operations researcher Zeynep Ton notes, "the same technology [used to create stressful, inhuman work schedules] could be used to create more stability and predictability.[44]" How might we use design, digital technology, aesthetics, and collaborative techniques to connect and empower the precariat at

[41] http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/16/business/a-push-to-give-steadier-shifts-to-part-timers.html
[42] http://www.basicincome.org/bien/papers.html
[43] https://www.ted.com/talks/nick_hanauer_beware_fellow_plutocrats_the_pitchforks_are_coming
[44] http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/13/us/starbucks-workers-scheduling-hours.html

every level and location? How might we learn to surf the giant wave of contingency? That is a challenge, but a noble and necessary one if we care about making better futures for all.

Conclusion: Metastability

“An epic, operatic struggle is at hand,” Bruce Sterling told a conference of makers in Barcelona this year.[45] There are very little indicators, or even rationale, for going back to a more typical 20th century work modality that is stable and predictable (and boring and soul-suckingly bureaucratic in many cases). Flexibility, casualization, freelancing, sharing, digital tethering, the disappearance of work-life divide, self entrepreneurship, lightweight innovation, and all the other elements of a fragmented, episodic work environment are here to stay (in some form, at least for a generation or two). But we don’t have to trade soul-sucking bureaucracy for soul-sucking precarity.

Complexity scientists have a concept, called metastability, that describes systems that are able to sustain themselves even though they are not in their lowest energy states (which systems tend toward). If absolute security/stability and absolute chaos/precarity are the two lowest energy poles, then we will have to design systems (with technology, policy, culture, economics, architecture, stories) that can provide flexibility and innovative opportunities while not unfairly burdening workers and their families (and ultimately society at large) with those added risks. Debt reform, worker retraining, government regulation, and social reciprocity are a few ways we might move ourselves toward a more metastable work environment. Every day might be different, but there’s a more consistent pattern over months or years. We can imagine a scenario in which I might not know exactly what work I will be doing over the coming days or weeks, but I know I will have some kind of work, a guaranteed minimum income, and the opportunity to use my skills to find more money, more satisfaction, more time, or more creativity along the way.

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[41] Bruce Sterling, FAB10 talk, citation TK.

h.

Debunking the Myths of Pro-Bono

BY: MATTHEW MANOS

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THE WORLD WON'T COME TO A HALT

"Unquantifiable contributions will accrue rewards of status, gratitude, and goodwill mediated through the new social and symbolic structures emerging today"

In the same way that gift culture breaks down barriers between strangers by acting as a social lubricant, pro-bono work can open a whole new window of opportunity to service-providers and entrepreneurs around the world. This is a micro-example that extends itself to the beneficial effects of giving in our professions. Giving in our profession acts as a way to break down societal and economical boundaries that have traditionally limited us from doing the most meaningful work that could directly benefit society. Giving allows us an alternative to making meaningful impact (even when we are not directly working in the social sector) and the opportunity to utilize our very specific talents to benefit the greater good. Not surprisingly, however, there is a lot of stigma against pro-bono in the service-oriented business world:

- "When you give your work away for free you are devaluing yourself!"
- "Non-profits have really big budgets, so why should they get free stuff?!"
- "Oh, only rich people can afford to do pro-bono work."
- "Ah! Pro-bono is harmful for the economy!"

These 4 statements represent the negative perception of giving your work away for free, and can be overheard in many conferences, studios, agencies, or dinner tables of service providers. Unfortunately what is not understood is that each of these concerns, while valid, are rooted deeply within myths that have been created by thought leaders in the marketing world who, not by surprise, are making a killing off of their non-profit clientele. Should we really be trusting marketers in the debate around the value of services provided by... marketers? In an attempt to inspire optimistic perspectives on the practice of pro-bono work, we are going to walk through the 4 myths of pro-bono in order to tackle each issue head on:

01. GIVING WORK AWAY DIMINISHES ITS VALUE

"I'm not against making money, but I am saying we can do both. We have designed a capitalist system wrong. We assume human beings are one-dimensional, all they do is make money, so we've created a money-centric world. Money commands everything because that's our interpretation of capitalism ... what kind of world is that? It's a very uncomfortable interpretation of a human being. We have been turned into robots. Yes we are selfish, but also selfless, but we don't allow that to be brought out."[47]

It is assumed that when something is given away for free, it loses value. This assumption comes from a collective understanding that when something is free, there is no exchange of value. This pre-conceived understanding is rooted in the thought that "value" and "money" are one in the same, but they are not. In fact, "monetary value" is just one of many types of value. For a business, value can come in many forms, but most commonly, value can be bucketed into the following give and take dichotomies:

a. Value <--> Monetary Exchange

b. Value <--> Networking and Contact Development

c. Value <--> Expansion of a Business' Capabilities

d. Value <--> Marketing and Public Awareness

As a rule of thumb, a service-provider should remain weary of a project that does not at least offer 3 of the above 4 values in return for the success of their project. A paid project that has an NDA (non-disclosure agreement) attached to it, for example, will result in

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[47]Muhammad Yunus, The Guardian. http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2013/may/24/muhammad-yunus-business-solve-problems

monetary exchange, networking and contact development, and an expansion of business capabilities. A pro-bono project, as an additional example, will result in networking and contact development, expansion of business capabilities, as well as marketing and public awareness.

When a business is giving work away for free, they are of course not receiving monetary value in exchange, but they are receiving value of some kind and, therefore, their work is not devalued at all. Pro-bono contributions represent meaningful economic activity that is measured not by quantitative returns but qualitative returns from the activity that advances human progress. It is a “nonmonetary circulation” of services that benefit the greatest societal needs that will have larger returns in a less instantly gratifying way as monetary exchanges have, but a more worthwhile and lasting return. Pro-bono is also now an avenue to reorganize giving methods in society, making it more decentralized, bottom-up, peer-to-peer, and self-organizing...this allows for many to give without having to accrue large amounts of wealth over a long time in order to do meaningful giving.

02. NON-PROFITS HAVE BIG BUDGETS, SO WHY SHOULD THEY GET FREE STUFF?

A stat that I love to bring up when discussing the value of pro-bono service is this: Non-profit organizations, in the United States alone, will spend close to 8 Billion USD per year on design and marketing expenditures. I only reference design and marketing because that is the field that I am in. Throw in all fees that come along with third-party relationships that non-profits in the US and beyond hold, and watch that number multiply.

One of my favorite things to do when speaking for an audience is ask the crowd to shout out ideas as to how much they think non-profits in the United States are spending on marketing and design expenditures. Without any deviation, I always hear faint shouts of “nothing” and “maybe a million or two,” When I reveal the actual statistic of “actually, close to $8 Billion”, I always get the same response: “Well shit, where is that money coming from? Why doesn’t my organization have access to these kinds of budgets?” The 9th or 10th time I heard this concern, I began to second guess the legitimacy of that statistic I discovered on the Harvard Business Review. Are organizations really spending close to $8 Billion per year? How is that possible if the thousands of non-profit leaders I have spoken to are telling me they are working off budgets that are, seriously, only in the hundreds, sometimes thousands, of dollars? I decided to look into it.

ILLUSTRATION BY ZOE-ZOE SHEEN

While the presence of $8 Billion for marketing and design expenses in the non-profit sector is surprising, even more surprising is the statistic of how many organizations are making up that statistic. The answer? A handful. These kinds of organizations that are making up about 90% of that enormous statistic are massive academic institutions, family foundations, and global operations that are employing thousands. Unfortunately, these organizations—with annual budgets in the Billions—are painting a picture for society that makes us all assume that all non-profits have it this well off. That just isn't the case. In fact, if you go knock on any local organization's door, you'll quickly learn that they likely have a staff of one that handles absolutely everything. You'll also learn that they have, on average, one month's worth of resources in the bank. You'll also learn that they are spending 80% of their work week applying for grants and foundation money.

03. ONLY RICH PEOPLE CAN AFFORD TO DO PRO-BONO WORK

I will always remember the time someone said to my face:

> "well not all of us have mommy and daddy paying for our apartment. Some of us have to make a living."

Unfortunately this assumption was served with a side-order of spit after presenting my concept for a business model in which half of a service-provider's work would be given away for free.

Our society maintains an understanding that "philanthropy" and "giving back" are acts that are reserved for the wealthy. However, the idea that only the mega rich can give back has proven to be false thanks to the emergence of new models of business in which giving back and getting coexist.

I launched verynice with 75 of my own dollars. It helped me purchase my first domain name and hosting plan. After launching, I wouldn't shut up about it. I met a lot of people, and I grew this business fast. As with many entrepreneurs, I had no investor behind me, and I didn't have anything handed to me—I stumbled until I had the resources I needed to self-fund the success of our business. This included me working numerous day jobs to pay the bills while running verynice from my apartment in the late nights. Several years down the line, I was fortunate enough to bring on a business partner who would subsequently share in the highs and lows of fine-tuning the business model until the day that we finally figured it out.

For many of us, contributing to social change in the world seems far-fetched in our daily lives, but in fact, giving back has never been a more accessible endeavor. We live in a time where we can help people in disaster-torn countries like Haiti from our office, several thousands of miles away. Long ago are the days when only missionaries and peace corps members could give in their profession. Now nearly everyone can leverage their careers to foster social impact. Giving is not an exclusive party for the church or rotary club, and it is not just for the top earners, either. Instead, philanthropy is an opportunity for everyone to apply to not only their personal lives, but also their professional careers.

i.

Pro-Bono: Beyond Professional Services Firms

BY: LINDSAY FIRESTONE,
DIRECTOR OF ADVISORY SERVICES

TAPROOT FOUNDATION

In the time since the first edition of *"How to Give Half of Your Work Away For Free"* was published, it has been great to see the response Matt Manos' message has elicited, chiefly from the professional services industry. The #GiveHalf model and accompanying book has helped provide a very actionable challenge to professional services firms to rethink what is possible in making pro bono a core part of the service business model. While verynice's literal 50% pro bono model might not be for everyone, professional services firms in general have historically adopted pro bono service programs more widely than their counterparts in other industries. This is likely because the concept of what pro bono service is and what it takes to deliver it well can be easily understood in the same terms as a professional services firm's core business framework— at the simplest level: do what you do every day but, for the benefit of social good, make the decision to not charge a certain type of client for that work.

But what about companies that are not professional services firms? For companies whose core functions do not involve delivering professional services to clients— pharmaceutical companies, credit card companies, software companies, etc.— it is not always as obvious how well their competencies can translate into pro bono professional services. At the Taproot Foundation, however, we have long thought that what is at the core of this movement— the pro bono ethic— is just as relevant and actionable for non-professional services companies. In fact, it was with that belief that I founded Taproot's Advisory Services practice in 2008 to help all types of companies build effective programs that can tap into and unleash their most valuable resource: their talent.

So do not worry if you are not a professional services firm. Here are the three key concepts that will allow you to tap into the ethos and opportunity that Matt and others describe in this book:

"Pro bono" is not Latin for "free legal work" (or "free graphic design"): Do not get stuck on perceptions and definitions.

It has become widely accepted that most nonprofits need to receive legal services pro bono in order to access the expert advice that they need, but professional services in other areas like HR, IT, and strategic planning are equally necessary and similarly inaccessible to most organizations. The value of pro bono professional services is not limited to only one type of professional expertise— engaging your employees' core professional expertise, whatever that may be, to provide relevant professional services to an organization serving the public good is "pro bono service". What is most critical, though, is not the label* that you use to describe the work or program, but rather the adherence to the principle that professional services must be provided with the relevant, appropriate professional expertise. For legal services, identifying that someone has the right expertise seems easy— because lawyers go through a specific training (law school) and certification process (the bar exam). But having to match a need with the right expertise should not be a prohibitive obstacle to providing pro bono services in other areas. As an employer you make assessments and decisions every day in your hiring, development, and promotion of employees about their level and areas of expertise. Applying the golden rule and providing professional support to nonprofits with the same relevant level of expertise you would want staffed on an internal assignment is often gauge enough.

"Volunteering Redefined" (Taproot's original founding tagline in 2001):

As you also see reflected in the #GiveHalf materials, when professional services firms are considering providing pro bono services, two of the main factors they need to consider and navigate are the opportunity cost of billable hours and the implementation of an approach that ensures quality and accountability— challenges that relate very directly to considerations of their everyday business model. For companies that are not service providers, however, exploring the idea of a pro bono program is almost always embedded in the topic of 'volunteering.' Why does this matter? Because there are several key ways that this type of service is fundamentally different from traditional volunteer program models. Simply put, the management needs and deliverables of pro bono service programs share more in common with a consulting model than with the activities of a traditional volunteer program. As a result, we have seen time and time again that a company's early success in developing a pro bono program is often directly related to its ability to recognize and address those distinct requirements through the program design. That sentiment was in part reflected in Taproot's original founding tagline: "Volunteering Redefined," recognizing that pro bono service programs require a shift in the traditional approaches to volunteering.

Like the professional services firms that Matt describes, your company also has a pool of talent with relevant, needed professional expertise, and your employees also deeply desire these opportunities.[48] The biggest difference is simply that your employees' work structure has most likely not been organized around an external facing, consultative approach. Fortunately, for most companies the solution is often close at hand. This challenge can be addressed by incorporating project management best practices:

- A defined scope of work and incremental timeline
- A clear translation of the roles, responsibilities, and expertise needed to fulfill it
- Processes for vetting, staffing, and managing that talent
- Clearly assigned project oversight accountability

Coupled with the critical components of client service:

- Clearly designated client decision-making authority
- Mutually understood timeframe and process for incremental client feedback and approval
- Mutually agreed upon project closure milestone (for example a presentation of findings, implementation of

[48]2007 Volunteer IMPACT Study", Deloitte & Touche USA LLP, 2007.

final deliverable, or handover of final product)

While many traditional, more hands-on volunteering activities certainly also benefit from some of these components (what volunteer would not want to have a clear sense of what they are doing and how long it should take?), it is the combination of all of these components that often differs from what is already in place to bring to life and manage other common corporate volunteer activities like serving food in a soup kitchen or cleaning up a playground.

Increased Investment Upfront Yields Increased Returns at the End

While developing an effective pro bono program might require a more substantial investment of time and resources upfront than more traditional models of volunteerism, the good news is that all indications from the field have shown that investment ends up being part of a very balanced equation: the inputs required might be greater, but the value of the outcome for the participants— all of them: the nonprofits, the volunteers and their employers— is greater as well. If you invest in the approach needed to make a pro bono program run well, the return on your investment is high.

Leveraged Impact

According to a 2012 True Impact study, the value to nonprofits of skilled volunteer support for general operations, technology, and professional services is up to 500% greater than the value of other forms of volunteering.[49] Not only does that reflect a higher value use of an employee's volunteer time, it also enables your nonprofit partners to expand their impact going forward by building their organizational capacity, lowering operating costs and increasing efficiencies.[50]

Enhanced Employee Engagement and Leadership Development

In addition to its profound value to nonprofits, pro bono service has also proven to have a significant impact on the volunteers. Across critical HR matters including leadership development, retention and morale, pro bono service programs produce impressive results. Compared to traditional volunteerism, employees who participate on a pro bono project are 22% more likely to develop new internal relationships and 300% more likely to demonstrate material job-

[49]"2012 Volunteerism ROI Tracker Analysis", True Impact, 2012.
[50]"Can Corporate Volunteering Support the Bottom Line? The Challenge. The Opportunity. The Case for Investment," LBG Associates, The Case Foundation and Hands on Network, 2005.

related skill gains as a result of their pro bono experience.[51] These improvements are evident not just to participants but to their managers as well; in a Capital One survey, participating employees' managers were asked about changes in their employees following a pro bono project. Of surveyed managers, 90% reported improvement in their employees' leadership skills.[52] A recent survey of employees by HP yielded similarly impressive results, finding that employees who participated in skills-based volunteer projects had 13% higher morale than employees who participated in traditional hands-on volunteer activities and 59% higher morale than non-volunteers.[53]

Opportunity for Innovation

A pro bono service program also provides a rare opportunity for employees to gain perspective and sharpen their critical thinking as they apply their skills and training in a new and challenging setting. More than half of the colleagues of participants in GSK's largest pro bono program— PULSE— reported that employee participants had "brought new ideas and fresh ways of thinking back to GSK" and that the PULSE volunteers had "shared an external perspective that has helped to inform or shape GSK work, thinking or policy". In addition, 75% of participants' colleagues reported that the participating volunteers had brought back a "reinvigorated energy, spirit, motivation and morale to those they work with.[54]"

j.

A Step-by-Step Guide to Giving Half Your Work Away for Free

BY: MATTHEW MANOS

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN FOR FORBES MAGAZINE

[51]"2010 Volunteerism ROI Tracker Analysis", True Impact, 2010.
[52]"Pro Bono Service: The Business Case", LBG and Associates, 2009.
[53]Hewlett-Packard, 2013.
[54]"PULSE 2011 Impact Report", GSK, 2011.

THE FOLLOWING POST IS A TRANSCRIPT OF AN ESSAY BY MATTHEW MANOS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN JANUARY, 2013 FOR FORBES MAGAZINE. NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR: THIS IS THE ORIGINAL BLOG POST THAT INSPIRED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS BOOK, "HOW TO GIVE HALF OF YOUR WORK AWAY FOR FREE"

The Double-Half Methodology (aka the verynice model) was invented in 2009 as a way to create a viable business strategy that allows for "extreme philanthropy" in small, service-oriented businesses. Put simply, the method is this: Double your work load, give away half for free.

While this model was originally created for a design consultancy, it is in no way limited to designers, and has the capacity to be adopted by dentists, hair stylists, massage therapists, you-name-it. The following post breaks down the logistics of giving away half of your work for free into five steps in order to transform philanthropy into an accessible—and viable—endeavor for small businesses.

Step 1: DISCOVER AND DEFINE WHAT YOU CAN GIVE, AND WHO YOU CAN GIVE TO

I define a social enterprise as a for-profit company that is giving away at least 50 percent of its stuff for free. "Stuff" can hold a broad definition, and it can be one of three things: profits, services, or products. Out of the three, the verynice model focuses specifically on services. Ask yourself: "What can I offer?" If you make logos, the answer to that question is design. If you style hair, the answer is haircuts. After you have defined what you can give, define who you can give to. Non-profits? A specific sector of non-profits? A specific community? The answer to that question will vary depending on the industry your small business is in.

Step 2: DO TWICE THE AMOUNT OF WORK YOU NORMALLY WOULD

Though this might sound terrifying, the easiest way to give away half of your work for free while still doing just as well as everyone else is to do twice the amount of work of everyone else. It is quite a comical idea, but it makes sense, right? Let's say a lawyer typically has five clients at a time. If you multiply that by two, you get 10 clients. Five of those are paid engagements, and the other five are donated. Like magic, you are able to do just as well, while giving away 50 percent of your time to benefit society.

Step 3: INCREASE YOUR BANDWIDTH AND FIND SUPPORT IN CREATIVE WAYS

OK, so I'm not crazy. I realize that it's not easy (or possible) to wake up one morning with twice the amount of work and somehow still expect a good night's sleep. So how can you increase your bandwidth without going bankrupt? One answer: Build a network of remote team members to join forces with you on your pro bono endeavors. In the age of iPhones, Google Docs and Skype, remote collaboration has never been easier, but the greatest part of it: it helps keep your monthly overhead tiny. We all have networks of our own that have been acquired organically over time—the people we went to school with, the people we work with, that guy we met at that party. Reach out to members of your network, let them know what you are up to, and invite them to be a part of it. You will be surprised by the enthusiasm your colleagues will have toward collaborating as volunteers for the greater good, especially if you make it convenient to them.

Step 4: KEEP OVERHEAD AS LOW AS POSSIBLE, KEEP PHYSICAL EXPANSION TO A MINIMUM

Consider working in that coffee shop down the street for a few more months. Are you sure you need that $3,000 chair? Make cuts where possible in your business, and only buy what you really need.

Step 5: LEVERAGE YOUR IMPACT, AND USE IT TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

If the social enterprise movement has shown us only one thing, it is this: Doing well by doing good is not only viable, it is a given. Keep track of your impact and share it with the world. Keep close contact with the people you are donating your services to. Eighty percent of the non-profits verynice has helped over the years are entirely comprised of a volunteer staff that have full-time jobs elsewhere. As a result of building strong relationships with these clients, the majority of our for-profit clientele has actually come to us thanks to a referral from a non-profit organization.

When you are a big business that is making hundreds of millions of dollars each year, handing out a couple million to charity here and there is very easy. But when you are a small business, one that, on average, is making less than $250,000 ... well, being philanthropic can be difficult. The verynice model hopes to establish a new standard amongst small business owners in order to define a new kind of corporate philanthropy that has the ability to identify the potential for social good in small business.

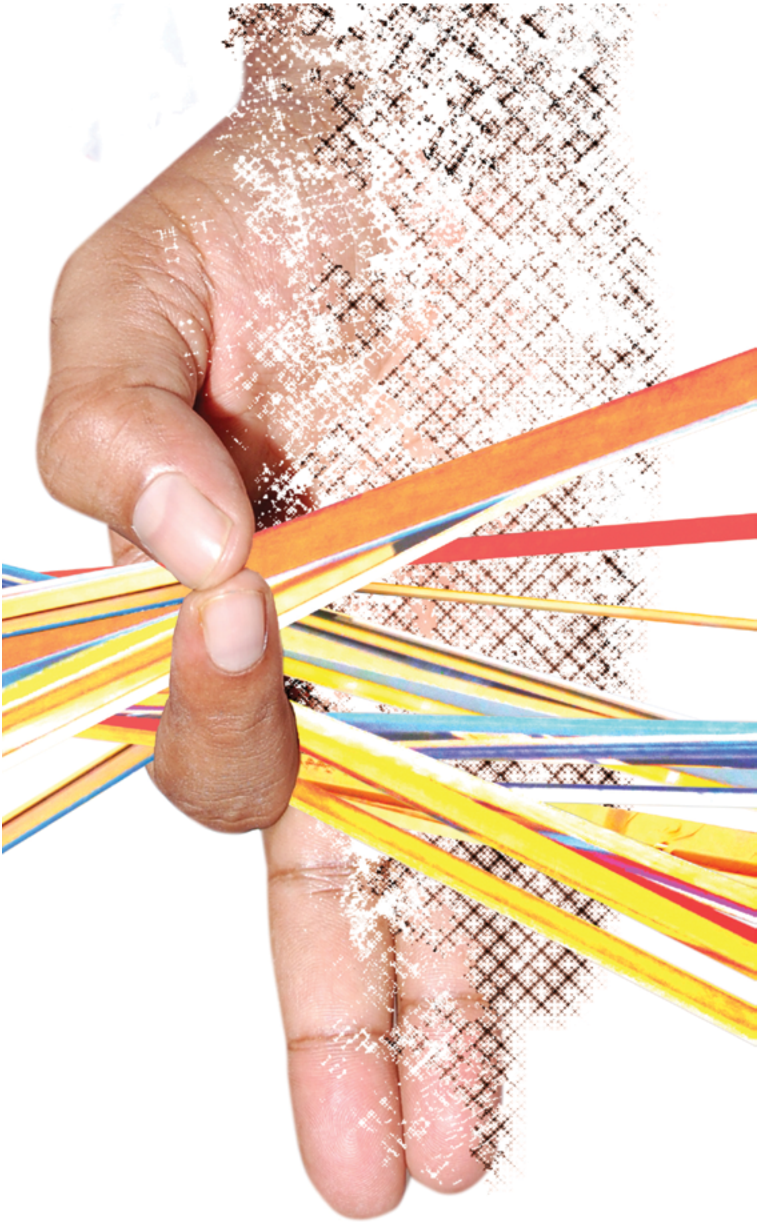

ILLUSTRATION BY JARAD SOLOMON

k.

Personal Growth and Giving Back

BY: JASMINE YOUSSEFZEDAH

I was first introduced to the #givehalf model two years ago, at the very onset of my own start-up. Looking for inspiration, I had set up shop at a collaborative co-working space for social entrepreneurs in downtown Los Angeles, and met Matt and the verynice team, which was about a fourth of the size they are now, my first day there. At the time, I didn't know how instrumental Matt and his then atypical business model would become in my career trajectory.

filmanthropos was born out of a desire to combine my passion for storytelling with creating impact. Over the course of the past two years, we've developed into a full-service creative agency that specializes in storytelling and engagement campaigns, with a mission to scale impact through creative uses of new media. As of 2014, we have donated 650+ hours and $80,000+ worth of pro-bono services nationwide and boast a portfolio of projects for clients including UNICEF, Burton Snowboard's The Chill Foundation, The Los Angeles Music Center, Los Angeles River Revitalization Corporation, The Boys & Girls Club, Green Dot Public Schools, The Goldhirsh Foundation & LA2050, and The Children's Bureau of Southern California.

Being in the business of storytelling, I've found that an authentic story is the most engaging and inspiring. So my aim is to inspire you to create your own blueprint and path towards growth and development as an entrepreneur based on the #givehalf stepping-stones that have helped me in my career.

Volunteering for Skills Development

I came from a business background— I studied business administration in undergrad at USC and then went on to IE Business School in Madrid to get my MBA. Storytelling and video production emerged out of a self-taught hobby, which I later decided to turn into a full-time career. I wanted to start a purposeful organization and felt the best way to create impact with storytelling was to help the social sector make their stories heard. Because I didn't have any training in the art of storytelling for the non-profit world, Matt encouraged me to start volunteering and offering pro bono creative services to non-profits. And with his full endorsement and confidence, our company started out as a 100% pro bono social enterprise.

This leads me to my first stepping-stone: the importance of volunteering. I gained my storytelling skills through volunteering and through taking on pro bono projects. The best way to gain experienced-based knowledge is to have an "I'll gain experience by doing" mentality and a willingness to pitch in on projects wherever needed. The most effective learning comes from actually living it and figuring it out.

By taking advantage of volunteering on special projects or events that were versatile and multi-disciplinary, I gained a well-rounded experience and almost immediately began scaling my network, which helped open more doors for me.

If you're having trouble getting started, try reaching out to a nonprofit that has a mission closely aligned with your values or to any one of the wealth of #givehalf companies that have become a part of the pro bono movement. Our volunteers are our greatest assets.

Achieving Sustainability through #GiveHalf Adaptation

Volunteering allowed me to quickly establish relationships and put me in touch with people that I networked with and learned from. It's enabled me to make genuine connections with people where there is a real give-and-take relationship. On top of this, leveraging creative volunteers to staff pro bono projects allowed me to quickly scale filmanthropos and build a portfolio while keeping overhead costs at a minimum.

However, 100% pro bono wasn't going to cut it from a sustainability standpoint, and I began realizing there are inherent costs in video production that can't be offered pro bono, for instance, production insurance. And as our company grew, and as I started working with more creatives that came from a cinema background, my standard for quality work dramatically increased. I began learning things like what type of composition and unseen factors go into making a vibrant, visually appealing, quality shot.

Recognizing that bypassing certain costs to stay true to a 100% pro bono offering could ultimately hurt our portfolio in an industry that so heavily depends on quality output, we transitioned from pro bono to discounted offerings.

This transition was a pivotal moment for the company, as it forced us to gain a comprehensive understanding of the value of our work and gave me a much better grasp on what kinds of projects could be feasibly offered at a 100% pro bono rate. It also allowed me to hone in on what types of clients qualify for discounted vs pro bono offerings and gradually led us to differentiate between our paid and pro bono clientele as we made our way from a 100% pro bono to the 50% #givehalf model.

This leads me to the second-stepping stone: the #givehalf model is a guideline that is meant to be adapted to your business and industry. While 50% pro bono is what we should strive for, it is no way a must-do directive. It's important to recognize this as you're scaling and learning from your larger projects and clients. In our case, sustainability with the #givehalf model means offering animation and live action video projects pro bono less hard costs to small non-profits, while evaluating medium to larger sized non-profits on a case-by-case basis. We're here to do our part in helping alleviate expenses for non-profit organizations in unique ways that will work best for us.

The Power of Collaboration

One of the biggest advantages of pro bono work is the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from fascinating individuals. When working as an entrepreneur on a bootstrap budget, you have to get creative in finding low-cost personal development and skill-sharing opportunities.

For me, the collaboration that has resulted from doing pro bono work has lead to the formation of a skill-sharing network, long-lasting relationships with peers, team growth, synergistic partnerships with like-minded entities, and a reliable advisory committee of coaches and mentors. It has protected me from isolation, and pushed me to remain resolute in my mission to scale filmanthropos.

Beyond these outcomes, collaboration with our volunteers cultivated my sense of self-awareness. I started to see my own strengths and limitations, and began to realize that my core strengths and the best use of my time lies in business development: scaling the business, seeking collaboration opportunities, exploring new initiatives, securing new clients, and recruiting quality talent that can deliver what is considered quality work in the industry we're in.

As filmanthropos grew, I also began to see that delivering a video as a stand-alone piece to our clients was not enough to accomplish impact. They needed to know what to do with it— how to use it, how to engage people with it, how to get more visibility, and track metrics with their content.

At that time, we were experimenting with a marathon model of skills-based volunteering specifically for video production. Leveraging a production team of seven volunteers, we took on a self-created challenge to produce a pro bono short story for a select organization entirely over a 24-hr period. This collaboration led to the development of our most successful and popular offering today— the ProduceAthon— which we now offer on both a pro bono and large corporate level.

The point I want to iterate here is that serendipity lies within pro bono collaboration. When like-minded individuals dedicate their time and resources towards a purpose greater than themselves, we as individuals learn, become more self–aware, and invent. We are inspired to find new ways of leveraging the skills that we've acquired in one field to succeed in another. We think big and accomplish synergy.

Getting Creative with Pro Bono Offerings

As previously mentioned, a ProduceAthon is a social action campaign formed around the idea of creating a short-form video in a restricted timeframe, and addresses the issues our clients were facing with using their stories to generate engagement.

Social action campaigns engage an audience around a topic across various platforms. The engagement can occur through giveaway contests, social media management, through putting on events and activities, etc. So what we began doing with the ProduceAthon was building hype around the idea of creating and releasing a video— which in turn promotes the cause that the video is about.

A ProduceAthon is marketed as a round-the-clock creative blitz where volunteers come together to help a cause tell their story through a short film made over a very limited timeframe— often 24 to 48 hrs. Causes interested in becoming the beneficiary of the video compete to win through a social media giveaway campaign.

The best case study we have today of a successful social action campaign is our #ProduceLA2050 themed ProduceAthon. For #ProduceLA2050 we partnered with LA2050, the Goldhirsh Foundation, and the Center for Nonprofit Management to put on a series of events focused on creating a short film for an LA-based change maker that was helping to shape the future of Los Angeles in some way. The selected beneficiary of the event was LA River Revitalization Corp.

The campaign was split into a social media giveaway component, the ProduceAthon Event, and a Release Party to screen the video produced and celebrate our collective accomplishments.

The campaign raised awareness and engagement around the LA2050 draft goals, increased exposure for all competing non-profit organizations, and generated visibility and discussion around the revitalization of the LA River. It‘s a great example of a win-win-win scenario for all players involved.

This example really speaks to the importance of getting creative with your pro bono offerings. By marketing the good you are doing with a campaign, or partnering with other organizations with similar missions to yours for greater visibility, your pro bono initiatives have more likelihood of resulting in lead generation, increased awareness, and greater engagement.

Stay Self-Motivated & Persistent

The last-stepping stone is to remember to be persistent. As an entrepreneur, I'm constantly experimenting with new initiatives, which results in a cycle of very high highs and really low, lows.

The way that I've learned to deal with this is to recognize that this is a cycle many people experience; the reality is that leading a company is challenging and time consuming, and it really is a learning experience. I've learned to recognize that the lows are part of the process, and that they're necessary, because for me, those are the times when I've been the most innovative and creative to pull myself out of them. Once I had this realization it was much easier to stay steadfast in my vision.

There was a point in our excitement where the agency decided to take on 10 pro bono video projects and complete them all within the last quarter of our fiscal year— we basically had seven weeks. Not realizing how unrealistic this was, this pushed us into a pro-bono to paid ratio of 80:20. With only two volunteers on hand at the time, we were completely overwhelmed and had to hold off on taking on additional pro-bono projects for a few months. While it took longer than expected, we forged through the work and gained invaluable insight along the way.

The final takeaway here is to remember that challenges are part of the process, and are necessary because they force us to innovate.

I.

Reinterpreting the Role of a Designer

BY: MATTHEW MANOS

THE FOLLOWING POST IS A TRANSCRIPT OF A TALK BY MATTHEW MANOS ORIGINALLY PRESENTED IN NOVEMBER, 2012 AT CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY FOR THEIR TEDX EVENT IN PITTSBURGH. THE TRANSCRIPT PRESENTED BELOW HAS BEEN EDITED IN ORDER TO REPRESENT MORE ACCURATE STATISTICS REGARDING VERYNICE AS A STUDIO AT THE TIME OF PUBLICATION OF "HOW TO GIVE HALF YOUR WORK AWAY FOR FREE."

To begin to talk about the idea of "reinterpreting the role of a designer," I will start with bringing two unfortunate stereotypes to the surface. The first unfortunate stereotype is the idea that designers only make "facades." We aestheticize innovation. We don't start business, we brand business. We don't create products, we package ideas. We don't build community, we design housing. This stereotype exists, in part, because of what society expects us to make, but is also a result of the old models that design education follow.

We are taught that graphics, architecture, products, and online experiences are designable mediums, but I would like to argue that the current landscape of design has proven the following: Designers can make facades, but we can also make a lot of other stuff.

We can brand business, but we can also start business. We can package ideas, but we can also create products. We can design housing, but we can also build community.

The second unfortunate stereotype I want to highlight is the idea that systems are static. Multiple choice has one answer. Business makes money. Designers help sell things. But what if systems were not as static as we believe them to be? What if all systems were dynamic? What if all systems were a designable medium? This shift in mindset, I argue, can transform the practice of entrepreneurship into a medium of design. But with the introduction of any new medium or tool comes with it the introduction of new obligations.

The internet introduced new obligations of privacy, but also openness. The automobile introduced new obligations of safety and traffic control. Electric light introduced new obligations of energy efficiency. The introduction of entrepreneurship as a medium for design also requires new obligations. We have an obligation to do good. The old model of business designs for the short term. The old model of wealth is to introduce philanthropy after the riches. The new model of business, however, designs for the long term. It designs for wealth and philanthropy to come simultaneously.

But where can I, as a designer, start? Well, the most logical starting point would be the world I am a part of, the design industry, but thinking a bit bigger then that, a good starting point to begin approaching this obligation is service-oriented business at large.

Why would I want to reinterpret the design industry? In 2008, I made a lot of coffee took a ton of internship positions. I knew from the beginning of my college career that I wanted to start my own design firm, and thought the best way to learn how would be to throw myself into as many work environments as possible, so that is what I did. I acted like Sherlock Holmes within these positions, taking note of what works and what does not work so well within each of the various studios, but began to realize that not much was working. I realized that there was actually not a model that I would even want to replicate. It became clear to me at this point that the design industry was one that favored financial gain over giving. It was an industry that favored what sells over what is beautiful.

Frankly, I got a little sad. I thought to myself: "MAN, is this really what I want to devote my academic career, and professional life too?" The realization that the design industry may not be the one for me really bummed me out and threw me into a pit of confusion.

In search for a greater meaning within the design industry, I learned about the idea of "social design." However, I quickly realized that the "social" in social design really was not so social... What do I mean by this? There are a handful of design firms that claim to have social missions, and that focus their work and energy towards designing for non-profit organizations, but charge for the work. I find charging a non-profit organization for the output of a business in the service-sector to be one of the largest moral dilemmas in business today. Why? A recent article in Harvard Business Review estimates that the annual marketing and design expenditure amongst non-profit organizations in the United States alone is a whopping 7.6 Billion dollars. Let's put that into perspective. $7.6 Billion dollars can but up to 100,000 homes in the United States. $7.6 Billion dollars can provide over 1 Million college educations. For about a dollar a day, World Vision estimates that a child in an impoverished community can be granted access to fresh water, nutritious food, healthcare, and even an education. Imagine, then, what could be accomplished with the spare funding that would result from the eradication of marketing and design expenditures amongst non-profit organizations...

But designers are not evil, and design studios are not to blame. The design industry is trapped in this old model, a model that perceives volunteer service as an extracurricular activity instead of an integral component of design business. How can service-oriented business give without giving from those we dedicate our efforts toward helping? What if a design studio could thrive from giving services away for free? What would a very nice design studio look like? These questions are the seed of my company.

verynice started with an extremely naive mission statement: save the world. Upon further reflection on what it was that I actually wanted to accomplish with the studio, I came to the following conclusion: Change the design industry through disruptive innovation and authentic intention. Truth-be-told, the model was a bit naive, being 100% pro-bono. Of course if you do the very complicated math on that one, you can see that it would lead to a revenue of approximately $0.00. The company was not sustainable, and I realized I was basically setting myself up for failure. I knew that if I wanted to accomplish my goals with the studio, I had to have a model that could allow the studio to be my sole focus, to give it the attention it would deserve.

Sad, once again, I took a step back, evaluating the landscape of business. On the left you have the for-profit corporation. I knew I did not want to be that, because that is what the design industry, and service-oriented business at large, already was. If I wanted to change it, I couldn't be it. On the other side of the spectrum you have the non-profit organization. This model was not quite attractive, either. verynice wants to help non-profit organizations. If we, too, were a non-profit organization, we would enter a vicious and eternal cycle of seeking help to help. I knew we needed to be able to give while remaining self-sustaining so as to not rely on anyone but ourselves to meet our goals… and that is when I found the magical space in the middle: social business, and social entrepreneurship.

A social entrepreneur is a designer of business whose intentions are not in capital gain, but instead in the advancement of the greater good of society. A social enterprise is one that thinks and operates as a non-profit organization would, but has interesting design in it's planning so as to be able to sustain itself and actually create a profit as opposed to relying on government funding or funding from donors. This is the model that is home to a verynice design studio.

verynice is the world's first internationally operating social graphic design enterprise. We are a full service design enterprise that dedicates over 50% of its efforts toward pro bono design. a verynice design studio has helped build over 250 brands in every sector and industry across the globe. We work with a diverse clientele that range from Fortune 500 companies to small local shops. Some of our clients have included The United Nations, MTV Networks, Human Rights Campaign, Facebook, Amnesty International, and Disney. As of 2011, a verynice design studio has also provided over $1,000,000 worth of pro-bono design and consulting services in 6 continents to 200+ organizations thanks to our team of 250+ international volunteers. Of course $1,000,000 is a long way from $7,600,000,000, but I'm an optimistic guy, and I like to think we've made some what of a dent…

In a recent interview, I was asked to express my thoughts on the future of fundraising. I believe that in the future, fundraising will cease to exist. Of course that is a distant future, but it is a reality. The role of fundraising in the present day is to aid organizations in approaching problems in order to bring justice and vision to the problems we experience in our society and culture through business (yes, non-profits are businesses). In the future we will see less and less non-profit organizations, and more and more social enterprises.

I love non-profits and I work with them all of the time (and have for years), but it is an old model of business that should be reconsidered. Seeking donations, grant writing, etc., as business strategies, limits an organization's ability to give by drawing their focus away from the actual cause at hand. Social entrepreneurship, on the other hand, is a new medium for approaching the same causes that any non-profit organization might approach. The difference between the two models: Social Entrepreneurship allows an entity to be self-sufficient and independent through the development of various for-profit components that are integrated with the organization's outreach. This kind of model not only allows the company to do well by doing good, but it also allows for an efficient focus on the end goal, which is to solve a problem, as opposed to constantly seek help.

We are all given a short time, and I think the biggest mistake a lot of entrepreneurs make is that they design and optimize their vision to provide the largest financial return possible. Now, making money is not a bad thing, but what should be known and understood, is that in the end, our salaries, the cars we drive, the square footage of our homes… none of that matters. What matters is the legacy that our business and our vision can leave behind – a legacy that has the ability to shape, disrupt, or destroy, a familiar system. When you disrupt a familiar system, you change perspective – you change the way a community can define themselves to inspire future innovation. Just because things are the way they are does not mean they should remain that way. I want to invite you all to leave your mark on something, and don't be afraid of ignoring what you are brought up thinking is natural.

m.

Imagining the Potential of "Free"

BY: MATTHEW MANOS

THE FOLLOWING POST IS A TRANSCRIPT OF A TALK BY MATTHEW MANOS ORIGINALLY PRESENTED IN FEBRUARY, 2014 AT THE PENN MUSEUM FOR JOHNSON & JOHNSON'S TEDX EVENT IN PHILADELPHIA. THE TRANSCRIPT PRESENTED BELOW HAS BEEN EDITED SINCE ITS ORIGINAL PERFORMANCE.

Non-profit organizations are spending billions upon billions of dollars each and every year on fees billed by service-providers and other third party operations like each and every single of us in this room. $8 Billion of that alone is allocated for design and marketing, the industry that I primarily work in... every. single. year. I don't know about you, but this reality just deeply frustrates me. Imagine what could be accomplished in this world if we created new, more creative, economic systems that allowed organizations to spend less on overhead, and more on impact.

I'm fascinated by the idea that some of the world's most persistent problems— think hunger... housing... access to water, etc. can actually be solved by just a very simple reallocation of financial resources.

This is where pro-bono work comes in. Pro-bono, short for pro-bono publico literally means "for the good of the public." It is most commonly attributed to the legal industry as a means of making otherwise expensive services available for free to those who cannot afford it. In more recent years, however, pro-bono has entered many more economies in the service space such as design, marketing, public relations, human resources, and more.

For the past 10 years I have been a pro-bono practitioner.

When I was 16 years old, I took on my first pro-bono project. I found myself in a skatepark in the Silicon Valley. You could find me there on most weekends, but this particular weekend, something spectacular happened. I saw a man in a wheelchair ripping around the park far better than I and everyone else. Intrigued, I rolled a bit closer to the man only to find that he was not alone, but was actually with a group of kids, also in wheelchairs. I came to find out that this man was the founder of a non-profit organization that taught handicapped children how to participate in extreme sports. Incredibly moved, I volunteered to design some stickers to help promote the organization. Lucky for me, the week prior, my godmother sent me a pirated copy of Photoshop. Needless to say, the stickers really were not my best work, but they did have a profound impact on me that would define the next 10 years of my career as a designer.

I'm the founder of a company in Los Angeles called verynice. We are a global design and innovation consultancy that gives over half of its work away for free. So far we have been able to save non-profit organizations a total of over $1,000,000, which has been able to be directly reinvested into each organization to generate more impact. It is our sole mission to invent new models of business that allow for the alleviation of expenses for non-profit organizations.

In more recent years, we have started to pioneer a new kind of movement amongst service providers and, as a result, there are now dozens of other businesses and individuals that are giving half of their work away for free on top of thousands of practitioners that have begun offering pro-bono as a service inspired by our mission.

Why do we do this? Let's start imagining something pretty remarkable.

If non-profit organizations can save billions a year… and if service providers in my industry alone waived fees for non-profit clientele, we could accomplish some pretty amazing things on an annual basis. This is the equivalent of 40,000,000 puppy adoption fees, clean water for 160,000,000 people, and the labor/materials required to build homes for 160,000 families.

I'm constantly asked why we give half of our work away for free instead of 10%, 20%, 30%… the reason is far less logistical than everyone might imagine. It really is a philosophical decision. I truly believe that if we want to create social impact, we need to make giving back an integral component of our day-to-day lives, not an extracurricular activity that we do on the weekends.

We might not think that we can each individually change the world through our work. In reality, we can't. But what we can do is resist the societal norm of charging for our work in the social sector so that they may move onward and upward with an abundance of resources.

Let's put this into context. Where are we right now? We are at Johnson and Johnson. Right now this company employs just about 125,000 people, and your average employee is making about $50/hour.

If every employee at Johnson & Johnson gave away one hour of their time for free every single week, the pro-bono hours would come to 5,659,200 per year. Under the context of this company, that translated into nearly $300MM worth of service.

One hour might not seem like a lot to you and me, but really the potential, especially when a gesture like this is scaled across a massive institution like Johnson & Johnson... is incredible because every hour counts. We can all make more impact than we could ever imagine, especially if we all work together. I want to challenge each and everyone one of you in the audience alone to donate one hour of your time every week to someone in need. There are almost 1,000 of you sitting in front of me right now, that is the equivalent of almost $2.5MM worth of service.

Just imagine the impact we can all make if we just made a couple of small shifts in our daily schedules.

Not only is this beneficial for the world at large... it is beneficial for companies. Pro-bono work allows employees to gain new skills, experience new things, feel inspired, and develop a strong bond amongst colleagues. The crazy thing? It is also incredibly easy.

While non-profit spending increases each year, funding decreases. The good news is that each and every one of us has something great to offer. We can all give back to those in need with our talents, ideas, perspectives, and patience. Giving back is not just for the wealthiest among us. We need new models of philanthropy that can coexist with the old models of giving in order to allow non-profit organizations to save valuable resources.

To read from J&J's credo— "We are responsible to the communities in which we live and work and to the world community as well." The purpose of my being here is to challenge you all. To help you think differently. To help you live up to the standards this great company preaches. So let's do this. Together.

Thank you.

VII. About the Author(s)

Who the heck is Matthew Manos? What is verynice?

MATTHEW MANOS (b. 1988) is a creative director and author who is dedicated to disrupting the economic models of service-oriented business. Matthew began his freelance design career at the age of 16, which is the same year he took on his first pro-bono client, and launched his first company. Three years later, he founded verynice, a global design and innovation consultancy that dedicates over 50% of its efforts toward free services for non-profit organizations. Matthew has helped build 500+ brands in every sector and industry across the globe, and his studio works with a diverse clientele that range from Fortune 500 companies to small local businesses. As of 2014, verynice has been able to provide over $1,500,000 worth of pro-bono design and consulting services in 40+ countries spanning six continents to benefit 300+ organizations thanks to a volunteer staff of 350+ practitioners located around the world. Now with offices in Austin, Los Angeles, and New York, the company is on track to donate the equivalent of over $10,000,000 worth of pro-bono services by 2020. Notable clients of verynice have included UNICEF, NASA, MTV, NRDC, Edison International, Facebook, Chrysler, Kaiser Permanente, and Disney Imagineering. In 2014, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti recognized verynice for the company's unparalleled commitment to pro-bono service for local non-profit organizations.

Named one of "Seven Millennials Changing the World" by The Huffington Post, Matthew's work and ideas have also been published in 250+ print and online venues internationally including Forbes, The Guardian, Inc., GOOD, and MTV. He is also the author of "How to Give Half of Your Work Away for Free," an internationally distributed documentation of verynice's 50% pro-bono business model and the subsequent "#givehalf Movement" that has attracted nearly 5,000 readers across 1,300 cities. Matthew speaks regularly at events and institutions across the United States including an influential TEDx talk at Carnegie Mellon in 2012 titled "Reinterpreting the Role of a Designer" and an additional TEDx talk in 2014 for Johnson &

Johnson delivered at the Penn Museum titled "Imagining the Potential of 'Free'"– a presentation that served as the catalyst to accelerate the company's own pro-bono initiative.

Matthew is a trusted advisor and mentor to hundreds of social entrepreneurs and young designers from around the world. Currently he is on the Board of Directors for AIGA Los Angeles, the Executive Advisory Council for The Taproot Foundation in Los Angeles, a mentor for Code for America and A Billion+ Change/Points of Light, and an Advisory Board member for The Chill Foundation (the non-profit wing of Burton Snowboards), CreateAthon, filmanthropos, The $100 Solution, and Youth Leadership America. Representative of his passion for connecting the fields of design and business, Matthew pioneered the first class on entrepreneurship in the UCLA School of Arts and Architecture in 2012, where he lead the course for two years. Matthew has also served as a guest lecturer for the Art Center College of Design's Business 101 course since 2010. He holds a BA in Design Media Arts from UCLA (2010), and an MFA in Media Design from the Art Center College of Design (2012).

Contributor Bios:

ANDREW GOTTLIEB
FOUNDER & CEO, NO TYPICAL MOMENTS

Andrew stands for envisioning a world of possibility, giving back as much as receiving and helping others realize their unique genius. He's the Head NTM'ER at No Typical Moments, a Content Creator at GameChangers 500 and a Published Author at ASPIRE Magazine.

JASMINE YOUSSEFZEDAH
FOUNDER & CEO, FILMANTHROPOS

Jasmine Youssefzadeh is a social entrepreneur committed to finding innovative uses of new media to address social challenges. Jasmine founded filmanthropos (www.filmanthropos.com) to humanize social issues and empower organizations to better interact with their constituents. Filmanthropos is a creative agency specializing in storytelling and engagement campaigns. Using new media as a platform, filmanthropos leverages the power of authentic storytelling to engage audiences and drive them towards taking action. Jasmine holds a BS in Business Administration from USC (2007), and a Masters in International Management from IE Business School, Madrid (2011).

MUBEEN KHUMAWALA
BILLION+ CHANGE

Mubeen Khumawala was born and raised in Houston, Texas. After graduating from the University of Houston, he joined Teach for America, through which he was a founding staff member at YES Prep Brays Oaks. After three years in the classroom, Mubeen went to Deloitte Consulting where he worked on a technology implementation project for a Fortune 100 client along with a pro-bono project to create a blueprint and launch a literacy foundation in the city of Houston. Currently, Mubeen is an MBA student at the University of California, Berkeley Haas School of Business. The summer before his MBA, Mubeen served as aQuarterback (Social Impact designed for MBA's) fellow for Points of Light: Corporate Institute.

Mubeen Khumawala is an MBA candidate at the Haas School of Management at University of California Berkley who provide pro bono service to Points of Light through the Quarterback initiative. Prior to this he served as consultant at Deloitte Consulting and a corps member with Teach for America.

JENNIFER LAWSON
BILLION+ CHANGE

Jenny Lawson is the Vice President of Corporate Strategy at Points of Light, the world's largest organization dedicated to volunteering. She is the past director of A Billion + Change campaign to mobilize billions in skills-based and pro bono service securing more than $2 billion in pro bono pledges from U.S. businesses – the country's largest commitment in history. She has driven corporate engagement in social and environmental issues through the Pew Center on Global Climate Change, the Nature Conservancy beginning her career in affordable housing advocacy at AHC, Inc. and as a founder of the Alliance for Housing Solutions.

YVONNE SIU TURNER
SENIOR MANAGER, CORPORATE RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS, POINTS OF LIGHT CORPORATE INSTITUTE

As the Senior Manager, Corporate Resources and Programs at Points of Light, Yvonne is responsible for developing and enhancing the

Corporate Institute's suite of employee volunteer resources. Previously, she served as the Marketing Manager for A Billion + Change, a national campaign housed and managed by Points of Light that in 2013 inspired more than 500 companies to pledge skills-based support to nonprofits in the largest commitment of pro bono service in history.

Yvonne holds a Master's Degree in International Development from the School of International Service at American University. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in International Studies from Colby College. She was named Young Professional of the Year in 2013 by the American Red Cross of the National Capital Region, and she is a pro bono volunteer with the D.C. Alliance of Youth Advocates.

LINDSAY FIRESTONE
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ADVISORY SERVICES, TAPROOT FOUNDATION

Lindsay Firestone Gruber is a widely recognized authority on corporate pro bono programs. Since founding The Taproot Foundation's corporate practice in 2008, Lindsay has advised executives across Fortune 500 companies on the strategy and design of their pro bono, corporate philanthropy and employee engagement initiatives. Under her leadership as Managing Director, the Taproot Foundation's Advisory Services practice has grown to be the global leader in corporate pro bono program development.

Lindsay is a frequent public speaker and has authored and contributed to many best-practice thought leadership pieces in the field on topics ranging from pro bono and leadership development to best practices in effective program design and scaling.

KATY DEVILLAR
RESEARCH FELLOW, VERYNICE

Katy Del Villar graduated with a masters degree in social entrepreneurship at Hult International Business School, San Francisco. Originally from the Philippines, she received her bachelors degree in Business Administration with a focus on human resource management from De LaSalle College of Saint Benilde. Her long term goal is to establish a social enterprise which promotes indigenous communities globally. Her passion for social entrepreneurship stems from her experience with the Asian Development Bank where she worked for years prior to taking her masters.

SHEENA YOON
RESEARCH FELLOW, VERYNICE

Sheena Yoon is currently an economics graduate student in Washington D.C. where her interests lie at the intersection of development economics, climate, gender, and political economy. Previously she has worked on social entrepreneurship initiatives with Not For Sale and while at Verynice led research on pro-bono economics. Most recently, she has worked for the World Bank with the Urban Development and Resilience Unit. She strives to bridge economics, ethnology, and design in the work she does ultimately for human-ecological development. In her spare time she enjoys brewing kombucha, discovering new cuisines, and getting into heated discussions on almost anything.

DALEEN SAAH
DATA SCIENTIST, VERYNICE

Daleen Saah received her Master of Science in Urban Planning from Columbia University, and has worked on planning initiatives in New York, California, Brazil and the West Bank. Her immersion in planning and social science has fueled her passionate for data analysis and visualization. Daleen serves as Data Scientist for verynice, providing data organization and storytelling to inform infographics.

Designer Bio:

KATE SLOVIN
DESIGN DIRECTOR, VERYNICE

Kate Slovin is a graphic designer and illustrator passionate about designing functional systems that create impact in local communities. After graduating from UCLA's Design Media Arts program, Kate spent her first year out of college as an independent freelancer. This experience allowed her to work for a wide range of clients including non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and small design firms. Kate was the Senior Design and Production Manager for GOOD Magazine. At GOOD, Kate built a diverse body of work that included web design, data visualization, branding, and illustration for clients including Starbucks, Toyota, Gap, and Marriott. For the past 5 years, Kate has served as a volunteer designer for verynice, a global design and innovation consultancy that dedicates over 50% of its work toward pro-bono services for non-profit organizations. Now Design Director, Kate has been able to create projects of all sizes for organizations around the world. A Los Angeles native, Kate currently lives in the Arts District.

Editor Bios:

LORIE MANOS

Born and raised in Redwood City, California. Received B.A. In business. Worked in various businesses before obtaining an MBA. Returned to school to obtain a teaching credential, and certificates for teaching tools to help special needs children. Classroom teacher for 10 years before beginning private tutoring business. Author of children's book, "The Ride Beyond The Escalator." Proud mother of two amazing sons, and grandmother to Avery and Austin. Enjoy nature, gardening, modern art, and spending time with her family.

ASHLEY RUBELL

Los Angeles native Ashley Rubell is an editor, experienced Hair Stylist, and all-around creative enthusiast. A licensed hairdresser since 2008, Ashley has been trained by the industry's best stylists and colorists, both at Chris McMillan Salon and Ramirez Tran in Beverly Hills, and has assisted a noteworthy roster of Hair Stylists both in Los Angeles and in New York.

RENAE GETLIN

Renae Getlin is a writer, editor, and strategist passionate about communication and the intersection of business and philanthropy. Her career began with volunteer work for several human rights nonprofits. Observing their struggle to deliver services with a lean staff and limited resources, she became determined to find a more sustainable way to enact change. Seeking an immersive experience in the nonprofit space, Renae worked in communications for OneJustice, a legal services nonprofit, where she assisted with operations, public relations, graphic design, and event planning. She currently manages marketing strategy and public relations at verynice, where she is thrilled to offer her services pro bono to nonprofit clients. Renae graduated with honors from the University of California, Davis with a BA in English and writing.